THE THIRD POWER

FARMERS TO THE FRONT

J. A. EVERITT

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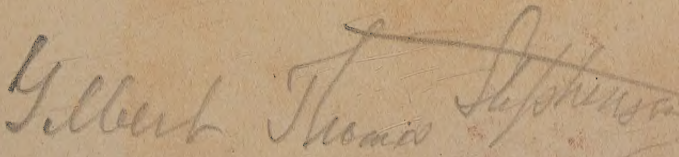

THE THIRD POWER

Farmers to the Front

James Andrew

By J. A. EVERITT
Founder of The American Society of Equity of North America
Indianapolis, U. S. A.

THE THIRD EDITION

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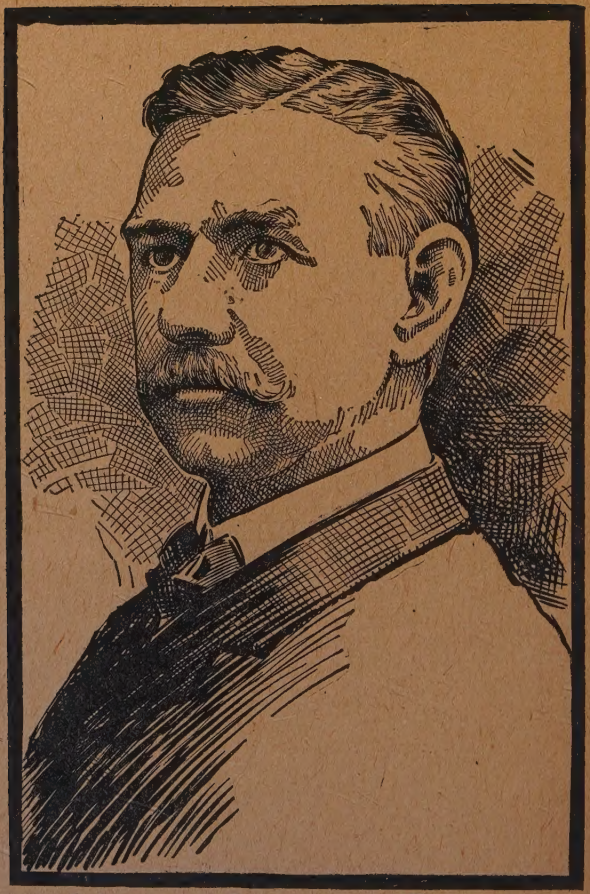

Yours to Bring Farmers
to the Front
J. H. Terrill

TO
THE LARGEST CLASS
THE MOST DEPENDENT CLASS
THE HARDEST WORKING CLASS
THE POOREST PAID CLASS
OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD
THE FARMERS
I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

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PREFACE

The farmers are under no legal or moral obligation to feed the balance of the world at an unfairly low price.

If there is a place or corner anywhere in the world where the producers of our food and clothing supplies (commonly called farmers) are not ready to revolt against the absolute domination of non-producing classes in pricing their products, I am not aware of it.

That the old and thoroughly bad system can speedily be changed—the producers regulate the marketing of their products and make their own prices—I am thoroughly convinced.

The farmers own the earth. We may safely claim that farming exists by Divine right. The farmers first possess all the food and clothing supplies which are indispensable for the life and comfort of humans and domestic animals; their products constitute the greater portion of traffic for railroads and ships; nearly all the factories work on raw material produced on the farms and the products of the factories are largely consumed by the farmers, or in equipments to handle farm products. It is clear, the important position of the farmer in his relation to all other industries, and how closely all other industries are interwoven with that of agriculture. It is the same way all over the world, in all civilized countries.

PREFACE

If any people, any one class, or any one industry is entitled to distinction as the preferred business, or its people "the select of the earth," that business is agriculture and the people are the farmers. If any one class should prosper more than another, this distinction should fall to the farmers. But this is not an attempt to raise one class over others, it is not even an attempt to make all equal, but to equalize conditions so all may have an equal opportunity to secure a fair share of rewards for efforts put forth.

All movements for the benefit of the masses had opposition at the start. An idea may be born and promulgated. The originator of the idea may be stoned to death or hung, but if the idea is good and has vital force, it grows and will not down. An evolution once started never recedes, but develops into the perfect flower or fruit.

This is an age of organization and cooperation. The old saying, "Competition is the life of trade", is changed to "Cooperation is the life of trade."

An individual would be strong enough if he was the only individual in the world. However, if he is one of a large class he is weak and the larger the class the weaker the individual. The farmer class is the most numerous, hence, the individual farmer is the weakest individual when he stands alone. "In union there is strength." The greater the union the greater the strength. The farmers united would be the greatest union—greater than all other unions combined. They would represent a strength and power such as the

world never knew before. The farmer power is the third power to assert itself, but will be the first power in strength and importance.

The bestirring and awakening of this last and greatest power is the most significant event of the present generation. No individual, no matter what his position—professional, industrial or political—can afford to ignore its birth and make calculations on its rise. For, while it is not a power that will contest for mastery by brute force in the fields economic or politic, it will affect all in its demands for equity and the equal rights of man.

The entrance of the American Society of Equity into the economic problems of the world, through which the Third Power will rise, marks an epoch. The awakening of the agricultural classes, the organization of them into national and international cooperative bodies, which is now being accomplished, will remove agriculture from the list of uncertain industries and place it on a basis of certainty for prices equal to that enjoyed by the best regulated manufacturing or commercial enterprises.

The undertaking is great, but since the correct plan has been evolved, the desirable ends, in the ordinary evolution of the times, will work out as surely as the fruit follows the flower. The revolution that will take place in prevailing customs and laws might appal us if it was not for the fact that, in the working out of this stupendous movement everything will be toward

betterments—physically, socially, industrially and politically.

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The hope of the author is that the soil owners and workers will be aroused to a sense of the true condition of their industry; that agriculture in America and throughout the world will soon occupy the high position to which it is entitled, when it will stand first of all in importance and power.

A fair, equitable, impartial, unprejudiced consideration of the Third Power is asked and your cooperation to quickly make it a real power is solicited.

THE AUTHOR.

THE THIRD POWER

CHAPTER I

RIGHT SHALL PREVAIL

A hundred years, and more, ago,
The farmers rose their rights to take;
They were the first to strike a blow
For freedom's and for country's sake.

Colonial sires, your path we tread,
Against oppression's tyrant hand;
Our bloodless battle shall be led,
Till justice reigns throughout the land.

We battle for the common good,
Our flag in freedom's cause unfurled,
As when "the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."

—*Elma Iona Locke.*

There is some danger to-day lest we forget that there are three factors in production—land, labor and capital. The political economist told us this many years ago, but when we read of the operations of Morgan, Gates, Schwab, and the other great capitalists and promoters, we are sometimes almost convinced that these men are the sole creators of wealth, and that land and labor really have nothing to do

with it. Yet the old law is sound, and so it will stand. Mr. Morgan has to stand on the earth, and in this sense at least it is the land that supports him. The Chicago gamblers could not speculate in wheat unless there were such a thing as wheat in existence. Mr. W. B. Leeds's railroad could last but a little while if it were not for the crops that have to be carried to market. So it is clear that these men do not create, and can not create anything. All that they do is to change the form of wealth, or to make, not to create, new wealth by the application of capital and labor to the products of the land, in one way or the other. If they make money in any other way they do it simply by taking it from some one else. The middleman, who gets between two people who want to trade, and takes toll of them both, adds nothing to the wealth of the country. The subject then is creation, and the relation of the different factors to it.

If it be true that the prosperity and material well-being of a country is dependent on the efficiency of these three instruments, land, labor and capital, it follows that we should do all we can to increase the efficiency of these instruments and maintain them at a high standard. We often seem to act as though we did not believe this to be true. For each class, instead of trying to add to the efficiency of other classes as well as of itself, frequently strives to increase its efficiency at the expense of the other classes. Labor seeks to extract the last dollar from

capital, and capital endeavors to force labor to work for the lowest wages possible. Organized capital and organized labor combine to beat down the price of products from the land until workers on our farms are the poorest paid of any class of laborers. Instead of cooperation, we see a struggle on the part of each to get ahead of the others. Yet the intelligent laboring man knows that the more capital there is in the country, provided it be wisely and productively employed and carefully managed, the better it is for him. And the intelligent employer understands that in order for him to get the best results he must pay his men enough to enable them to live well and keep themselves in good mental and physical condition. Perhaps it is safe—at any rate it seems to be necessary—to allow each of these classes to carry on this guerrilla warfare for its own good, even though success costs the rival something, trusting that good may in the long run come out of the conflict of interests. With land, however, we all admit the necessity of keeping the farmers prosperous to insure prosperity to others.

Certain it is that the efficiency of labor and capital has vastly increased in our day, particularly in our country. The freer use of the credit system, the more intelligent management of money, the rapid turning over of capital, the wonderful increase in the use of machinery, and intelligent labor, have all cooperated to enable capital to do things which it did not even dream of a generation ago. We

build bridges in the Egyptian desert in half the time and for half the cost that the English can. The Atlas Works in Indianapolis ships engines all over the world, and sells them in freest competition with foreign makes. There is hardly a country on earth that has not heard the scream of the American locomotive, the click of the American typewriter, and enjoyed the blessings of cheap American bread. The conquests of American capital and the effect of the wonderful resources of this country have been marvelous. Turning to labor we find that here, too, there has been an increase in efficiency. Education, growing intelligence and skill, sobriety, capacity for hard work, ambition to rise out of the labor class and to become a boss, facility in the use of machinery, inventive faculty, have all combined to make our labor the most efficient in the world. But to a certain extent these influences have been at work on the farms as well as in the counting-room, the mill and the factory. And our farmers are far in advance of their fathers and grandfathers in ability to turn out results in crops. But there is one great thing which they have not yet learned, and that is the power of combination. The laborer has been much helped by his unions, and because of them he can command a wage such as his brethren of other days could not. Through his unions he has made his importance felt, and has often been able to dictate terms to his employer. That employer also has found a great help in combination. By

means of corporations and trusts he has been able to carry through large enterprises, to have something to say about wages, to decrease the cost of production while keeping no small part of the saving for himself, and to influence, if not to constitute prices. So we see combinations, cooperation and trusts in almost every branch of industry. But the farmer has yet to learn the lesson. Others have something to say about the prices at which they will sell their commodities. If they do not fix them, they at least do influence them favorably to themselves. When the market is glutted, the manufacturer or mine-owner can curtail production, or shut down entirely, until the demand catches up with or runs ahead of the supply. The laborer can and does refuse to work except on terms reasonably satisfactory to himself, and the mere fear of a strike often drives the employer to make concessions which he would not otherwise think of making. The worker has a voice in the making of his wages, and the employer passes the tax along by making his prices accordingly.

But the farmer allows others to make prices for him. All he is supposed to know under the present system is how to work sixteen hours a day and the road to market. When he gets there he finds a man who tells him how much his produce is worth, and if he wants to take something home with him he is told the price of that also. He has no organization, and no method of bringing pressure to bear on those

who buy from him. Speculators and gamblers on boards of trade tell him what he shall sell his produce for. And he sells at their figures. The board of trade gamblers juggle with the price, and, though the condition of the crops and production and consumption should govern prices, they have very little influence. The prices of the important farm crops are made in organized markets by great aggregations of corporate capital ruled by unscrupulous human agencies, or by speculators who set prices arbitrarily without any reference to supply, demand or equity. This arbitrary fixing of prices destroys the independence of the greatest class of our citizens—the farmers—and is more tyrannical than were the taxes imposed by George III. This is because the farmers are unorganized, and usually without a knowledge of the real conditions. Commercial slavery of this degree is as bad as personal slavery. Thus the greatest class in the production of wealth, on which all others depend, is at the mercy of a few. The farmers are unorganized, demoralized industrially, and without any influence on the situation at all proportionate to their importance. Comparatively speaking, they are powerless. They grow all the stuff possible and sell it for what they can get—and then wonder why the year's balance sheet does not show a better result.

The agricultural industry of the country is still the victim of the most intensive competition system ever established. Each farm is in constant war-

fare against all the others. Each is striving to produce the greatest yields possible—in face of the indisputable fact that the larger the yields the lower the prices—and then sells the products without the least regard to other producers. In this way the markets are oftentimes glutted and perfect conditions produced for organized speculators and gamblers to perform their perfect work in depressing prices. Notwithstanding that the farmer of to-day, with the wonderful machines at his command, can produce five times as much product as the farmer of a few generations ago, his net earning capacity has not increased, but rather decreased. Also his land which then was virgin soil has become in large part exhausted; which item of itself represents probably half the value of his farm, and will require good management, the outlay of much labor and a large cash sum to replace.

The American farmer of to-day is not living from his investments in farm land, but as a mere laborer, and receives less than half as much pay as the union laborer, yet works harder and longer hours. In short, the farmers of the United States can only continue in business on the present basis by using the cheapest labor on earth, i. e., wife labor, child labor, and labor of their babes. The prices set by speculators and gamblers for the fine grain, vegetables and fruit—the products of God's earth—compel the agriculturist to resort to such unbearable extremities. No hired men can be secured to take

their places at wages the farmers can pay. While the nation and states cry against female and child labor in factories, not a word of protest is raised against the toil of the farmer's wife and children.

Why is it so that the farmers, who own the earth, control the food and clothing supplies (wool and cotton), are the creators of nearly all real wealth, the foundation of all our institutions, who are the most numerous and as a class the most wealthy, have become reduced to this condition of slavery?

It is a stupendous problem which, if solved, will mean more for humanity than anything since the Christian era. The dawn of equity to the farmers and through them to the balance of humanity, means the beginning of a social and industrial millennium.

Let us see what, then, can be done to elevate the agricultural business of this country and of the world and place it on an equality with the best of other professions and industries.

The fact that capitalists and laborers are so effectively organized makes it especially important that the farmers should organize. It is becoming clearer and clearer every day that whatever advantage either the capitalistic or laboring class wins, is won not so much at the expense of the other as at the expense of the great bodies of unorganized people who can not defend themselves. When wages are forced up by a strike the farmer pays a large part of the raise by an increase of price on what he buys.

When trusts lift prices simply because they have the power to do so, this increase also is largely made out of the farmers who are the greatest consumers. It must be so. The strife between organizations is bound to hurt the unorganized. When Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Baer agree on an increased scale of wages, Mr. Baer at once shoves up the price of coal. And the closer the unions and the trusts get together the more certain it is that the unorganized mob of consumers, of which the farmers constitute by far the largest element, will have to pay for whatever gain either wins, because they are not in a position to pass it along.

From every point of view, therefore, it is imperative that the farmers should organize, not for political, but for business reasons. Surely the man who raises the crops ought to have something to say about the price he gets for them. He should also know how much wheat, for instance, is being raised, so he may know what it is, in equity, worth; and, let me say, a needful commodity is always worth, in equity, what it cost to produce it, with a fair margin for profit added. This margin should be rated the same as others have set on their goods. The cost should be found on a basis that allows the producer a wage equal to what others get, interest on investment, a sum that will repair waste or overcome depreciation of the plant, with profit added. Then we have an equitable value. If his market is in danger of being glutted it should be as easy as it

would be quite as justifiable for him to curtail his output or marketing as it is for the manufacturer. He should have it in his power, as the laborer has, to say that he will not work except for fair remuneration. As it is now he is hedged around by the scheming of the shrewdest men in the world who manipulate his markets in mysterious ways. Besides this, his business is also subject to other uncertain conditions, such as weather, insects, blight, rust, etc. He can not escape from his thraldom to the natural causes. But he ought, as a freeborn American citizen, to vow that he will break the chains of his slavery to the other masters.

The question is simply one of the application of power. The farmer has the power to get whatever he wants, and to make his life what it should be. He must learn how to use it. No power except highly organized power is of any value in these times. The individual man is industrially powerless in the United States to-day. Two things, therefore, seem to be clear. First, the farmer must use his power to the end that he may be his own master, and not the slave of others and the burden-bearer of the nation. Second, he must learn that the only way in which he can use the power which is his, is through organization, an organization of his own, controlled by himself, and in his own interest. By doing this he will benefit, not only himself, but all classes of society. It is not proposed that he should wage a war of offense but simply one of defense. He is not

to ask privileges, but to insist on his rights—rights which other classes of society now exercise without question from any one, rights which in the farmer's case are Divine. Power applied through organization is the industrial law of the day. The farmer must rule his life by it.

CHAPTER II

There's the wily speculator,
Who forms his rings of steel,
While the honest man is toiling
In the hot and scorching field.
He is lying awake and planning,
You may rightfully suppose,
To cheat the honest farmer
Out of everything he grows.

In Frank Norris's great novel, "The Pit," is this:

"They call it buying and selling, down there in La Salle Street. But it is simply betting. Betting on the condition of the market weeks, even months in advance. You bet wheat goes up. I bet it goes down. Those fellows in the pit don't own the wheat; never even see it. Wouldn't know what to do with it if they had it. They don't care in the least about the grain. But there are thousands upon thousands of farmers out here in Iowa and Kansas or Dakota who do, and hundreds of thousands of poor devils in Europe who care even more than the farmer. I mean the fellows who raise the grain, and the other fellows who eat it. It's life or death for either of them, and right between these two comes the Chicago speculator, who raises or lowers the price out of all reason, for the benefit of his

pocket. Here is what I mean, it's like this. If we send the price of wheat down too far, the farmer suffers, the fellow who raised it; if we send it up too far, the poor man in Europe suffers, the fellow who eats it. And food to the peasant on the continent is bread—not meat or potatoes, as it is with us. The only way to do so that neither the American farmer nor the European peasant suffers, is to keep wheat at an average, legitimate value. The moment you inflate, or depress that, somebody suffers right away, and that is just what these gamblers are doing all the time, booming it up, or booming it down. Think of it; the food of hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people just at the mercy of a few men down there on the board of trade. They make the price. They say just how much the peasant shall pay for his loaf of bread. If he can't pay the price, he simply starves. And as for the farmer, why it's ludicrous. If I build a house and offer it for sale, I put my own price on it, and if the price offered don't suit me I don't sell. But if I go out here in Kansas and raise a crop of wheat, I've got to sell it, whether I want to or not, at the figure named by some fellows in Chicago. And to make themselves rich, they make me sell it at a price that bankrupts me."

That is a true picture of the actual situation. Farmers sometimes talk as though they believed that this gambling in wheat was a good thing for them, but they forget that what they want is a certain definite and steadily maintained price; not a high

price that will stimulate over-production, but an equitable price that will always secure the necessaries, comfort and some of the luxuries of life. A good price for a large crop, as well as for a short crop. A steadily maintained price, made by farmers, on the farm, instead of the uncertain price made by the speculators and gamblers on the boards of trade in large cities. They may and do make money—a few of them—out of an occasional corner, but the artificially raised price stimulates holdings; the farmers do not sell until the gamblers have had their innings, the price breaks, and the farmers rush their produce to market, and more often than not the sales are made on a falling market, and at prices as much too low as the corner price was too high. Speculators know how prone farmers are to hold on a rising market, and this helps them to accomplish their ends. In other words, the farmer does not control the situation. He simply supplies the chips with which the gamblers play the game, and even when he wins he does so in violation of the principles of equity. There is no design on the part of the gamblers that he should win. The grain pits are a curse to everybody that they touch. They are barnacles that have attached themselves on the produce of the earth. The speculators and gamblers in farm products are sap-sucking, unholy, Godless things that are holding up and gorging themselves on labor's portion as it is created on the farms. Boards of trade now run in the large cities are the

Devil's own workshop, where the rewards for honest labor are forged to the profit of the non-producing class. They are the greatest blight on the body of industry—a danger that threatens the very life of the farming industry of America. They are a bold, fearless, devilish power, that defies the laws of morality, the state and nation. There is only one power that can dethrone them. It is the grand, sweeping, majestic strength of cooperative producers. If the farmers' produce were not a necessity, it would not be chosen for gambling purposes. Men do not gamble with diamonds, for people can get along without them. They do not gamble with air, for every one can get all of it that he needs. Farm products are chosen because everybody uses them, and because they can not be got without paying for them, and also because, under present conditions, the farmers do not control them.

Farmers can be a power. They represent the greatest invested capital and they are the most numerous. They own the earth, consequently they can control the food and clothing supplies. Also, it is clear, in their fundamental position and numerical and financial strength, they hold the key to our entire political and industrial system.

Unorganized, the farmers are weak and the prey of all other strong individuals and organized classes. Organized, they will become the dominant power, and their business or profession will become the preferred on earth. Organized to put prices on their

own products they can remove many of the uncertainties now attending farming, and elevate the profession until it will be the equal of manufacturing, banking, merchandising, etc. Farming is manufacturing, banking and merchandising. To farm successfully also requires a technical knowledge equaling that demanded by any other profession, and which requires more application and years to attain than most of the professions; therefore, the successful farmer must be a man of great attainment and broad business qualifications. This will particularly be true from this time forward, when more intensive farming must be practiced to meet the ever increasing demands brought about by the increasing population and the multiplying abilities to consume.

It is clear that farmers have within them undoubted, great power, but they can only exert it through organization and cooperation. There are only two questions before the farmers to-day, the one is: Do you want to become free, independent and a powerful factor—in fact the most powerful and influential class in the world? The other is: Will you embrace the one way to accomplish your freedom and independence and place you at the head in this country and others, socially, industrially, and through your power of numbers be able to force a clean, strong, equitable government? Will the farmers answer these questions in the affirmative, or will they be forever the prey of the gamblers, the transportation companies, and other powers

which make whatever rates and prices they please, and discriminate against one class and in favor of others? To hold that this condition of things must continue is to hold that the farmers, on whom all others depend for their very life, comfort and privilege to do business, must depend on those who are really dependent on them. If the farmers were able to put a value on each of their products the betting in Chicago would stop, for the gamblers would know that they could not settle except on terms made by the farmers. If the farmers would control their own products, they could refuse to ship until the railroads gave them fair and equitable rates, and so along the whole line. No man can buy until some other one is willing to sell, and if the farmers of the United States could say through their organization that they would not sell till they got their price, they would get it. They could corner the supply as easily as the Chicago gamblers can, simply by holding on to what is their own—to what no one else has any right to except on payment of the price demanded by the owner, and they would soon come to the farm, or to the farmer's representative—his society—and meet his terms. Only thus can the farmer win his freedom and independence, and he can do it without infringing on the rights of any one else, and to the infinite betterment of all.

These questions seem simple enough, and yet they are apparently giving a good deal of trouble to certain classes of people who are already somewhat dis-

turbed at the thought that perhaps the farmers may decide to control their own business. In a recent number of Harper's Weekly, which is supposed to be dependent on certain Wall Street influences for its existence, there was printed an article entitled, "The Twentieth Century Farmer." It was, as all such articles coming from such sources invariably are, exceedingly flattering. We are assured, not only that the farmer is a good fellow, but that he has things pretty much his own way. "There are, for instance," the writer says, "scores of school districts in the thinly settled portions of the plains where the entire tax is paid by railroads and eastern corporations, and farmers' children attend the schools so supported." But the school tax is a tax on property, and if railroads and eastern corporations own the property in these districts, is there any reason why they should not pay the taxes assessed against it? How can this be considered a bonus to the farmer? Further, we know—if we know anything about taxation—that corporations shift the burden of taxation whenever they can possibly do so. If, in order to pay this school tax, the railroads raise freight rates, which are paid by the farmers, the farmers after all pay the school tax. At the very most our case simply is one in which the farmers find a chance to get even—pass the tax along; there is no gratuity involved in it, yet this movement means more than is yet evident. The tax will not

be passed along to the innocent consumers as I will show.

The Harper's Weekly writer speaks of the expense incurred by the general government for irrigation as something wholly for the benefit of the farmer. Surely it is for the benefit of all—of the whole country. Every foot of new territory opened up adds just so much to the wealth of all, and brings down the cost of food. This certainly is not to the special advantage of the farmers as a class. They are precisely the people that would be least benefited by it. Every new farm created out of the present arid region means just so much additional competition for the farmers already engaged in operating farms.

I have opposed this irrigation scheme at every opportunity and claim that if the government really is desirous of doing something for the farmers it can accomplish much more at less expense by helping the present farmers to irrigate their lands. Our present farms are not producing a third as much as they can and must in a comparatively few years when the population of the world has doubled again. Our averages of thirteen bushels of wheat, twenty-seven of corn, and other crops in proportion are distressingly low. Consumption has fully caught up with production, in fact in some lines is ahead of production. If the flow of the farm products to market was not hampered and restricted by the selfish interests of speculators and gamblers, and the

uncertainties of values, which enter into every transaction in agricultural products under the present system, the consumption to-day of grains, meat, fabrics, fruit, etc., would be immensely more. Intensive farming that will double, and finally treble the yields of our farms will be a necessity. It is not too early to begin now. This means irrigation, fertilization and scientific cultivation. Instead of the government, at fabulous expense, opening up a vast area of land that God did not design for cultivation until the more improved portion of our country was producing to its maximum, it can more equitably help the present farmers along the road to prosperity by irrigating the eastern part of our country.

One acre of irrigated land is equal in producing ability to three of non-irrigated land in our Mississippi Valley. Therefore, if the government would carry out its irrigation scheme completely, in a short time it would set our present farmers back a generation, and possibly prevent them from realizing their fond hopes of profitable prices for farm products. Our farmers are now just arriving at the point where they can rise above the competition of new territory being opened up for cultivation, and it would be a great calamity to subject them to this artificially created competition.

Let the government encourage irrigation and intensive farming on our present farms. It will result in dividing the large farms into small ones; prevent the small ones from being merged into large

holdings; furnish new homes for millions of families in sections of the country where the conditions are most favorable for social enjoyment and industrial success. True, this plan may not be of a great benefit to a few railroad corporations and other powerful interests, but will benefit many millions of the common people, and add untold millions to the wealth of our country.

The fact is that there are practically no laws for the benefit of the farmers, and it is the intention of the corporated powers, through the political machines, that there shall not be any. Ours is a government by the people in theory, but by corporations in practice. The people have won their way with little help from the federal government. In the very article under consideration we are reminded of the futile efforts of the farmer to get favoring legislation. "Once in a while," it is said, "there is a political insurrection, and a Farmers' Alliance sweeps the boards, sending farmer legislators to frame super-partial laws, which later are blasted by courts." So it is, and so it must ever be until the farmers learn how to exert their strength in practical ways and for practical ends. But we are told that "the settler demands the Indian's land and gets it." "That he demands the ranchman's grazing territory and obtains that." Of course this is true, and it would be true if there were not a government in existence. For the natural evolution is from the savage state to the pastoral state, up to the agri-

cultural state. Nothing could keep the farmer from getting the lands of the Indian and the ranchman. But the moment the farmer attempts to better his condition then we have a howl from the men who use every power they have, not simply to help themselves, but to persuade or force the government into helping them. So we have this in the article in Harper's Weekly:

"The demagogue devotes a great deal of attention to the farmers. Frequent schemes for uniting the wheat-growers or for forcing up the price of corn are evolved; cooperative plans to make unnecessary the 'middleman' are exploited—and usually with provision for a salary or commission to some shrewd city promoter who would not know a self-binder from a corn-harvester. Every little while the telegraph tells of the probable formation of a mighty union of farmers to reduce or limit the acreage of some crop. It ends in smoke—it was the dream of a schemer who hoped to profit by its success."

The threatened combination of the farmers is clearly not looked on with approval by the financial interests. Nothing that would benefit the farmer ever was looked on with approval by those interests. So in this article, the farmer is warned against "demagogues" seeking to make money out of their schemes, as if the very men who sound the warning had not all their lives made their living by "farming the farmers." There are many good texts in this Harper's Weekly article. Here is another:

"There are indications that the farmer does not take these things (proposed organizations) as seriously as he once did. He reads the daily magazines; he understands something of the other side of life. He travels more than in the days of high railway rates; the excursions back east for 'Old Home Week' bring him in touch with the people of other states. He is made broader and happier. Most important of all, he is learning to make of his occupation a business, and when that is done, he ceases to consider himself the favorite of fortune. As a result he becomes a business man, and takes rank among the captains of industry—not the commander, for none is supreme in rank, but an equal sharer in the advancement and prosperity of the nation."

Well, if the farmer has become a business man, why should he not act as a business man? Other business men strive to the uttermost to control the market; they form gigantic combinations to limit output, to lift prices, to regulate wages, and to "work" the government. Surely it is not demagogical to urge him to do what other business men are doing in the way of managing their own business. If Mr. Morgan may combine all the steel mills of the country in one great organization, there would seem to be nothing wrong in the farmer attempting to apply the same method to his own business. If he is to be a "captain of industry," he should profit by the examples of other captains of industry as far,

of course, as they keep within the law and the requirements of sound morals. Nor is there any reason why the farmer should not be the "commander," and "supreme." The farming class outnumbers any other class in the country. There are more than 10,000,000 men engaged in agriculture, and upon them we all depend for our very life. Probably one-half the people in gainful occupations are either farmers or people connected closely with cultivation of the soil. Their products constitute the great bulk of our exports, and their crops are the most valuable asset that the country has. We might survive the loss of our steel mills, but if our farms were to quit producing the country would go to ruin. Why should not the farmers be supreme? And if they strive for something less than supremacy—namely, mere parity with the rest of our people—ought they not to be encouraged? What is urged here is that the farmer should realize that he is, what Harper's Weekly says he is, "a business man," and govern himself accordingly. He should play the part which we all agree is his, use business methods, look out for himself and his own interests, and use his vast power for his own good. Surely there is nothing radical in all this. No line of action is marked out for the farmer which other business men do not follow to their own advantage. It is no more demagogical to say that the farmer ought to make his own prices and regulate his marketing than it is for a Wall Street promoter to suggest to the steel men

that they can make more money by combining for the purpose of controlling the market, regulating wages, and dictating prices. The cases are precisely parallel. The real truth is that the critics of such a policy on the part of the farmers know that it would be effective—and they do not want it to be effective. They know further than this, plans proposed—some of them in operation already in a limited way—are marked by none of the weaknesses that characterized the Grange, the Farmers' Alliance, and the People's Party. The fruit growers in some sections have already organized, and they have much to do with securing a profitable market for their product. When they find that the market in a certain city is full and in another is bare, they divert the shipments from the former to the latter city; and the association keeps its members informed as to the state of the market. So there are farmers' societies in certain sections, covering a few counties, which are doing the same thing.

There is nothing impracticable about this. If this limited cooperation is good, who will deny that complete national cooperation will not do more good. So when it is proposed to apply the same great principle of combination, which the Wall Street people have seen work so well in a limited way, to the whole agricultural class, we have a great outcry against it. They think organization is good for all people and all classes but the farmers. Some educators have tried to point out other ways for

farmers to make their business profitable. One of these advised to put wheat to one dollar a bushel, to "sow less wheat and put the ground in more profitable crops." That's easy; but he stopped too soon. Why did he not tell what these neglected crops are that would be more profitable? Another recommends, to cure all the ills of farming and make it profitable, to "Always sell at the highest price." A very simple plan. We recommend the farmer who can carry out this plan to not join a cooperative society. A certain professor of an agricultural college says, "Farm as we do. Our wheat yields thirty-one bushels per acre, while the average in Indiana this year (1903) is about ten bushels." When I asked him what he thought wheat would be worth if all raised three times as much without the ability to fix prices, he said: "Well, I had not thought of that." Others advise the farmer to "have patience and Divine Providence will work out their salvation." But I don't think it right to throw the whole job on God. Besides it is written, "God helps those who help themselves." Others say: "Wait for the regeneration of man, and your troubles will disappear." Having waited several thousand years already for this much desired time, I can not see much encouragement in this advice for present day farmers.

Organization by farmers is objected to now, simply because they know it will be effective in the light of twentieth century experience. No better

argument in its favor ought to be asked. But why object? Organization of farmers on the plan proposed will not harm, but will benefit every legitimate business.

CHAPTER III

In the rustle of the cornfields,
And the plowman's weary tread,
And the fingers of the tassels
Raised beseechingly o'erhead—
In them all a thousand voices
Whisper in the listening ear,
"Toil will ne'er possess its products
Until Equity is here."

In the broad and waving wheatfields,
A million heads may bow,
And in sunlight gold may glitter,
Promised fruitage of the plow;
Still the passing breezes whisper
In the anxious listening ear,
"Toil's just reward will linger
Until Equity is here."

So with orchard's blushing treasure,
And with meadow's wealth of hay,
And the lowing in the pastures,
And the garden's rich array—
All proclaim the same sad warning,
Toil in vain will seek its own,
For each season's stores will vanish
Until Equity shall come.

We thus have the three powers—money power, organized labor, and the farmer. And the question is as to the necessity of making the third power a real power. Let us consider first the relation of

these three powers, as things now stand, to the business of government. When a man is elected to congress he finds that the capitalist and the working man are keenly alive to their own interests, and that they are both capable of exerting, and as a matter of fact, do exert, much influence in Washington and in our various state capitals. Their representatives throng the lobby and committee rooms, and press in the most vigorous way on the lawmakers the claims of labor and capital. If a tariff is to be made, abundant opportunity is given to both capital and labor—especially to the former—to be heard, and the opportunity is improved to the uttermost. When a question of subsidy comes up the rich men who want the subsidy do not hesitate to urge the matter on congress, and congress is exceedingly deferential. The workingmen have got their eight-hour law, arbitration statutes, laws regulating the operation of factories and mines, anti-child labor laws, weekly wages laws, etc. And all this is taken as a matter of course. But back on the farm, far out on the lonely prairie perhaps, is a man who works with his wife, children and babes, harder than any other class of people on earth. There is no law passed to prevent child labor on the farm. No eight or even ten hour day. They work from sun to sun and then some more, and oftentimes when the year rolls around receive a smaller wage than convicts who are farmed out to corporations. Our new congressman hears little or nothing of him. He does not

spend much time in congressional or legislative halls. He is not consulted about tariffs or subsidies. Statesmen are not wearied with his importunities. No lobby fights his battles. He is practically forgotten. Congress taxes him for the benefit of the capitalists, and he does not complain—nay, he seems to feel that he has no reason to complain. He has his duty on wheat and a few other crops, to be sure, which in no way affects its price, a duty which is imposed simply for the purpose of making the farmer believe that he is getting some return for the taxes that he is forced to pay for the benefit of other people, and which in effect works to the benefit of the speculators and gamblers, by preventing a flow from outside countries when they want to manipulate the market here. If a farmer goes to Washington he feels so honored and flattered by any little attentions his representative may show him that he never thinks of suggesting that he needs anything in the way of legislation. And when the representative comes back to the district for re-election he talks of the honest farmer and sturdy yeoman, and every one feels that the account is square.

There is no use in getting angry at this, for the fault is wholly with the farmer. The politician knows perfectly well that in dealing with the farmer he is dealing with individuals, and with individuals who are divided into many different classes—even by their own societies, which number about 5,000 distinct organizations—by political and sectional

ful citizens, or as the most powerful combination of citizens. Then it would be able to do equal justice to all. And we should all realize that justice pays—indeed that it is essential to the perpetuity of our institutions. So, without doing one illegal thing, or making a single demand on the government, the farmers could, were they organized, work such a radical and wholesome reform as would transform our whole social order. All the people—and that is what the government ought to be, and in theory is—might conclude to fix a minimum price for the necessaries of life, and say that no one should be compelled to sell for less than that price, or that, if the crisis were grave, any one who offered that price should get the commodities. At least the government would realize that it could not afford to be unjust to the farmers, the most numerous class in the country. If we are to have a class government at all, and this ought not to be, we should have a government of the largest and most influential class. If we are to have favoritism, it should be favoritism, not for the minority, but for the majority. If it be said that the scheme involves socialism, the answer is that socialism for the many would be better than socialism for the few. If the government helps the manufacturer to make prices which are often exorbitant—as it does by imposing tariff taxes—it surely might help the farmer make prices that are fair and just. So the result of the effort of the farmers to organize to control their own busi-

ness might easily have the effect of forcing reforms all along the line, and I predict it will have. Hence, hasten the farmers' organization—the Third Power—the equitable government.

CHAPTER V

UNITE, O LOYAL FARMERS

Unite, O loyal farmers,
Beneath the banner true
Of equity and justice,
That shall thy foes subdue.
Cooperate with others,
And helped by numbers' might,
Go forward into battle
For liberty and right.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
Fear not the active foe;
The right shall ever conquer
For those who reap and sow.
Fair Justice, ever smiling,
Holds out her hands to all
Who follow in her footsteps,
In answer to her call.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
Waste not your time in rest,
Nor talk of mighty efforts
If money you possessed;
But seek for higher prices,
Reward for toil and care,
Let nothing you discourage,
But all things do and dare.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
And in one happy band
Press onward for the conquest
Of this, your native land.

O let your watchword ever
Be Equity for all;
Unite and quickly level
Oppression's mighty wall.

Unite, O loyal farmers,
Press on—press on to-day;
The time is ripe for action,
Let nothing you dismay;
For victory is coming,
To those who brave the wrong
And push with earnest vigor
The cause of truth along.

—*Effie Stevens.*

It has been said, and it is not surprising, that those who are now more or less in partnership with the government, should oppose and sneer at this effort to organize the farmers. And yet there is no good or honest reason why they should not welcome it and cooperate with it. For its purpose is not to help any one class at the expense of the others, but by helping one class, which is now neglected, to help all, and to improve the general social and business conditions. It has been said that the country could not prosper unless the farmers prosper, and that the farmers could not prosper without benefiting all other classes. Neither of the statements can be denied or doubted. So the real reason why this movement is opposed is, that the men who oppose it are getting special privileges from the government, and they know that these would be taken from them when the Third Power compelled an equitable

government. The fear is, not that the farmers would be unjust, but that they would insist on equal and exact justice to all. And justice is the last thing that the corporation trust magnates, graft gatherers and the tariff-pampered manufacturers want under the present system. Many men in this country at the present time thrive on inequity, and so they do not want the present arrangement disturbed.

The man who both buys and sells grain or other produce at prices made, not by the owners but by himself, knows well enough that he would have no just cause for complaint if the farmer made the prices on the farm. But he does not want this, because he thinks it would interfere with his own game, and would curtail or destroy his profits. But he may be mistaken, as a certain profit would be better than an uncertain one. So the protected manufacturer, who buys in a free trade market and sells in a protected one, thinks he does not care to have the farmer share in that advantage. To his mind there is nothing wrong in compelling the farmer to pay tariff-raised prices on all that he uses, and to sell his products at free trade prices, and in competition with the whole world. The banker favors cooperation between himself and the farmer which shall enable the banker to fix the rate of interest which the farmer shall pay, but he thinks he would not like to have the farmers cooperate with one another so that they might become their own

bankers or put themselves in condition that they don't need to borrow. The combined railroads, which, subject to the slight restraints (?) imposed by the Interstate Commerce Commission, fix the rates on farm produce, will no doubt object to a combination among the farmers to secure equitable rates, a fair price for their crops and regulate their movement to market. Even the trade-unions, which vociferously, and often violently, assert the right of their members to say what wages they shall be paid, and who subject the country to great inconvenience and even suffering in the struggle to carry their point, might be disposed to deny the farmers the right to combine for their own protection and independence, on the ground that it might advance the price of living. Always this desire to secure an unfair advantage, or an advantage at the expense of some one else, develops opposition to an organization among the farmers.

But, as has been said, there is no good and honest ground for any such objection. For the farmers propose to demand nothing that is unfair, unjust or dishonorable, nothing that it would not benefit all classes for them to have. To illustrate: If farmers organize and put profitable prices on their crops, they will have more money to spend for labor and every necessary and many of the luxuries of life. It is only the profit that may safely be spent. Therefore, more profit—margin—to the farmers will benefit the country merchant, bankers, professional men,

etc. They intend to put such a price on their products that they can hire the best help in the country. Thus the demand for union labor will be increased by millions. The illustrations might be carried out indefinitely; but what the use? If unfair advantages are cut off, or other classes built up to a level, though the class enjoying them would lose something, it would lose nothing to which it was entitled, and everybody would be benefited. This government can not continue half just and half unjust, any more than it could be half slave and half free. Indeed, injustice involves slavery, for the man who is the victim of injustice is the slave of him who profits by it. Thus the question is one of emancipation quite as much as it was forty years ago. So it is proposed to raise up this Third Power as the defender and champion of liberty. The man who is forced to pay one dollar more for an article than it is fairly worth, or to sell it for a dollar less than it is worth, is to the extent of that dollar a slave. The toil represented in that extra dollar is as truly slave labor as was the toil of the black man forty years ago, or that of the miserable peon in the Alabama cotton-fields at the present time. And how can the American farmer, who is grandiloquently spoken of by campaign orators as the freest man on earth, be free at all, in any proper sense, when he is compelled to market the fruits of his hard labor at prices made by some one else, who frequently enjoys, at the hands of the government, an advantage that

the farmer does not enjoy? Many fantastic schemes have been devised for the emancipation of the American farmer, but they have all had one fundamental defect in that they looked in the first instance to the government instead of the farmer himself. No people was ever freed except by its own exertions.

"Who would be free themselves must strike the blow."

So this appeal is not to the government, not to the politicians, not even to the law, but to the farmers themselves. If they show themselves worthy of the blessings which they crave, they can get them. The demand is not for government warehouses, free silver, unlimited issues of paper money, loans from the treasury on crops or land, duties on farm products, or even for the better regulation of trusts and corporations, but simply for the use of the power which the farmers have to help themselves. The question is whether they are patriotic enough, intelligent enough, self-restrained enough, determined enough, and wisely selfish enough, simply to put out their hands and pluck the fruit which hangs within easy reach of their grasp. They, in the beginning at least, need no help from any one. Governments are like God in one particular, in that they help those who help themselves. When people generally, and the politicians in particular, see that the farmers are in earnest about this business they will promptly cooperate. The farmers will find that they have as many real friends as they now have pretended ones.

Success will bring unexpected allies, and will uncover and discomfit secret enemies. Would the American colonists ever have won their freedom if they had waited for France to begin the struggle? Nay, rather did not France withhold her aid till she was convinced that the colonists could win their freedom even without her aid? The Cuban patriots battled for a generation before our great republic, at last convinced that there could be no peace till Spain was driven from the island, intervened in behalf of Cuban freedom and independence. English liberties are the product of centuries of toil and fight, and it was the French people that won liberty for France and maintained it against combined Europe. So the American farmer must not whine, and beg, and supplicate, must not rely on politics and politicians, nor even on Divine Providence wholly, but must, as others have done, fight his own battles. The victory is sure. And when it is won, as won it will be, it will be found that all will be benefited. So it is true that no American freeman, able and willing to support himself without bonuses or subsidies from the government, and without the protection of unfair and unjust laws, loving justice and fair play, and asking for nothing more than is rightly his—an honest reward for honest toil—need have the slightest apprehension about this movement for the organization of the farmers. The beggars, the preyers on other men's wealth, the parasites, the government pets, the grafters, the bood-

lers, and all who look on government as an instrumentality for their own enrichment, may well be disturbed. But there is no warfare to be waged against the rights even of these. We want to take the broad and manly view of this movement. It is not a grab for privileges, or a war of reprisal, but simply a firm and resolute stand for justice and equity. The farmers are not going to ask any one to give them something. They are merely going to take what is theirs. The Third Power, representing the divinely established business of agriculture, when it is organized, will not need to ask favors; it will only have to insist on rights. Favors it does not want or expect. Rights it will have.

CHAPTER VI

A NEW REBELLION

One hundred years and more ago, when America was young,
And writhing 'neath the tyrant's chain, the cruel oppressor's wrong;
Her gallant sons for freedom's sake went at the country's call,
And faced the cannon's shot and shell to bravely fight or fall.

They fought and bled for liberty, that this fair land of ours,
Might throw the tyrant's shackles by, yield but to higher powers.
They fought the fight, in God's good time they won the victory,
They laid the gory saber down and called their children free.

But are we free, does the sun in Heav'n look down on men today,
Freed from all bonds of slavery, who own no tyrant's sway?
Do they tread America's standard soil all equals in her sight,
All sharers in her bounty under Equity and right?

Go ask the busy farmer there, who toils from sun to sun,
If he enjoys that liberty, the right of such an one.
He'll tell you that there still remains injustice in the land,
That foul oppression grinds the sons of toil on every hand.

The farmer knows no liberty, for Power holds the reins;
He has to take the leavings after others count their gains.
His fruits of labor are controlled by grinding Capital,
And he is deemed a servant who, in fact, is king of all.

To arms, to arms! then men of brawn, you won the battle once,
Gird on your shining armor now and rally to the front!
Take freedom for your battle-cry, your watchword Equity,
And make the tyrant tremble when your ready sword they see!

Fear not though you have tried and failed for lack of Union strong,
Cooperation will succeed and right will conquer wrong.
Think you that our forefathers quailed when foemen charged the field?
They bravely met each sharp attack and would not, did not yield.

Then, farmers, rise in all your might and strike for liberty:
Demand your rights in unity, then call this nation free.
Put forth your earnest efforts in this grand and glorious fight,
Associate, then work and pray, and God will guard the right.

—*Maude E. Smith Hymers.*

A little further elaboration of the general helpfulness of the proposed plan may help to a better understanding of it. It has been said that the farmers could not be prosperous without benefiting all classes, and that prosperity of the country depends on the prosperity of the farmer. No one doubts the truth of these statements. They have a very important bearing on this argument. For if they are true, as they are, it must follow that a movement to better the condition of the farmers will be in the interest of all. And this is precisely the point that I desire to emphasize. For, unless it is made clear, the impression may prevail that we are making war on other classes and trying to seek an advantage at their expense. The further we get into the case the more obvious will it become that this is not the purpose at all.

What do the stock speculators mean when they

say that the prosperity of the country depends on the well-being of the agricultural class? Simply that that class is the largest in the community, that all others depend on it, that our farm produce is our greatest national asset, and that a bad condition here is a national calamity. Foreign trade, railroad earnings, the price of stocks, bank deposits, wages, and of course the welfare of all the industries directly dependent on the farm, are all affected by the condition of agriculture. Prices are largely regulated by the ability of the farmers to buy. Thus, all our business and industry are based on the farm—it is the foundation on which the whole structure rests. Is it not clear that it is to the interest of all that that foundation should be solid and substantial?

Look at the matter in another way. The farming class is the greatest consuming class in the country. When it, through stress of circumstances, is driven to rigid economy, sales fall off, stocks accumulate in factory and store, prices decline, collections are bad, there is less available capital to loan, money gets tight just when it is most needed, and we all feel the pinch. Luxuries are dispensed with. There are fewer pianos and organs in the houses of the farmers, fewer pictures on the wall, fewer books and newspapers bought. The farmer and his family make the old clothes do for another year instead of buying new ones. Farms are allowed to run down, either because their owners can not afford to keep

them up, or because they do not think it worth while. Improvements are not made; less machines are bought, and fewer hands employed, and finally the gains of former years are wiped out, then comes the mortgage, and the whole process of reconstruction has to be gone through with again. In the meantime the whole country suffers. It is all the result of a diminished consumption on the part of the farmers, brought about by large crops and low prices. With the farmer out of the market, or in it only to a limited extent, the market is bound to suffer, and all industries be harmed.

The first thing that the merchant wants to know, when he sends his commercial travelers out to the smaller towns, is whether the farmers are buying, and whether they are paying their bills promptly. The credit to be extended to the local merchant depends largely on the financial condition of the farmers. If they are buying liberally, and paying their bills with reasonable promptness, the city merchant knows that he can afford to sell larger bills of goods to the local dealer, and give him better terms than he could do under other circumstances. All this is elementary, and yet we often forget it. We seem to feel that prosperity is maintained solely by the buying of the rich people in the cities who are so lavish with their money. But it is not so. The farmers are the great consumers, and when they cease to buy, or curtail their expenditures, they not only limit the market by just that much, but they

lessen the power of people in the cities to buy. Smaller stocks in the stores mean a smaller output from the mills and factories, and that means reduction of wages and of the labor force. So the working man consumes less. So, too, less freight is hauled, earnings and wages fall off in the railroad industry, and consumption again suffers. Thus the farmer is inextricably bound up with all other classes of society.

Looking at the question, therefore, from the non-farmer point of view, we see that it is one of maintaining and increasing the consuming power of the farmer, which is equivalent to the maintaining and increasing of the general consuming power. And that is a result which all are interested in bringing about. Thus this movement is not for the good of the farmer alone, but for the good of all—the good of the whole country. To regard it in any other way would be singularly to misapprehend it.

The name of the organization which is now in process of forming, and which will make the Third Power a real power is *The American Society of Equity.* It is not a farmers' society only, but an American society—that is, for all good Americans who want to see better conditions prevail on the farm. It is not a benefit society, but an equity society. Benefits are always for an individual or class, while equity is for all. Indeed, it can not be equitable unless it is for all. Equity for one and not for another is not equity, but inequity. It is a

society that knows no state bounds; one that reaches from one side of the agricultural region to the other; one that every farmer can join, and be the better for joining. So when we propose to organize and secure fair prices for the farmer, it is not simply that he may be benefited, but that all may be benefited, and it has been shown that all would be benefited. To demand more than a fair price would be inequitable, and so is not to be thought of. Fair wages for a fair day's work, fair profits for the manufacturer, fair interest for the capitalist, fair prices to the consumers, and fair values for the products of the farm—this is equity. It is important that this should be thoroughly understood. For the attempt will be made, indeed it has already been made, to make it appear that the farmer is proposing to rob others for his own enrichment. This has been the method used by other classes, and it is not surprising that those who have practiced it should think that the farmers are going to adopt it. In fact, unfairness is so prevalent in commercial enterprises that every movement is looked upon with suspicion. The outsiders begin to look for the hook that will catch them. The golden rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is interpreted to-day, "Do him before he has a chance to do you." But it is not so with this society. The name and purpose of the society alike forbid it. It is an old maxim that those who seek equity should do equity. They are fortunate in being in such a position that

nothing can benefit or help them which will not help and benefit all others. So they are not subjected to the temptation to prey on others to which other classes have yielded. If they would put their prices too high they would curtail consumption. Hence, how reasonable then that they will do everything possible to secure the maximum market. In fact, this is one of the leading reasons for organizing and one of the principal objects of the society. If the Third Power controls the other powers it will be only because it is the biggest and most essential to the national welfare, and so ought to control. But it will be ruled by equity, and in and by seeking its own good it will, even admitting that it may not mean to do so, seek the good of others. Therefore, there is no reason why it should be antagonized and feared by any legitimate interest or industry. Rather it should have the cordial and friendly co-operation of all who want to see freedom and independence, peace and happiness, truth and equity, religion and piety established among the people of the earth.

CHAPTER VII

CLEAR THE WAY

Men of thought! be up and stirring night and day!
Sow the seed! withdraw the curtain! clear the way!
There's a fount about to stream;
There's a light about to beam;
There's a warmth about to glow;
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight darkness changing into gray.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

Once the welcome light has broken, who shall say
What the unimagined glories of the day?
What the evils that shall perish in its ray?
Aid the daring, tongue and pen!
Aid it, hope of honest men!
Aid it, paper! aid it, type!
Aid it, for the hour is ripe!
And our efforts must not slacken into play.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

Lo, a cloud's about to vanish from the day!
Lo, the right's about to conquer; clear the way!
And a broken wrong to crumble into clay.
With that right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door.
With that giant wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us for their prey.
Men of thought, and men of action, clear the way!

—*Charles Mackay.*

It is, of course, obvious to all that the price of farm products bears little or no relation to the cost of producing them. Wheat may range in price from $0.50 to $1.00 a bushel, and yet it costs the farmers as much to raise it in years of low as in years of high prices. Fifty-cent wheat may even cost more to produce than dollar wheat. For the lower price indicates an abundant crop, and this means that the demand for labor is great, and that consequently wages of farm laborers are high; but the point is that there is no fixed and established relation between the cost of production and price. Surely there should be. The consumption of farm products is reasonably uniform from year to year, and there is not often any great decline in consumption that would account for low prices. There is little or no fluctuation in demand, no real surplus, and the cost of production is a fairly constant quantity. Yet prices have a wide range.

Of course, it will be said that they are regulated by supply and demand—and how often have we heard that phrase; it is used very glibly by many men who have no knowledge whatever of its meaning. Let us try and find out what it does mean. Demand and supply are really the same thing—or at least they are the two faces of the same fact. Money in the hands of the man wanting wheat is supply, while wheat is what he demands. The farmer, on the other hand, demands money and supplies wheat. This would be clear if there were no

money in the world, and if all trade were carried on by barter. Then all the goods in the country would be both supply and demand. It is only when we measure goods against money that we come to look on money as demand and goods as supply. So the farmer demands money and supplies wheat, while the miller demands wheat and supplies money. So the law of supply and demand describes the working of a force that is not so simple and easily understood as we may at first think.

Again, we talk of demand equaling supply, or of supply equaling demand. This means absolutely nothing unless we take into account the question of price. An increase of price will affect both supply and demand, increasing the former and lessening the latter. And this brings us to the main point to be noted in this connection, and that is, that the force under consideration is not a great natural force above and beyond the power of man to regulate or control. We may say that the price of harvesters is regulated by the law of supply and demand, and so it is. But the men who make them control the supply and manufacture no more of them than they think can be disposed of at a good profit. Further, by raising or lowering the price they can, and do, temporarily influence the demand for harvesters. And here is the thing to be borne in mind. We may admit that the price of farm products is, or should be regulated by supply and demand, or, better still, by production and consumption, but still it is true

that the farmer has—or may and should have—the power to say what the supply shall be. A controlled supply is as much within his power as it is in the power of the manufacturer. So when some amateur political economist talks to you learnedly about the law of supply and demand, tell him that you propose to make that law work for you instead of against you. Coal is mined and marketed under the law of supply and demand, but when the anthracite barons think that the demand is not sufficient to absorb their coal at the right price, although there are millions of tons down in the mines, they shut off the supply. If the price is too low they raise it at the rate of fifty cents a ton a month. The farmers may do the same thing, if they will. Supply and demand, certainly,—but they can make the supply large or small at pleasure, or withhold it altogether. And you may play upon demand by raising or lowering the price of your products as you see fit. Yet, always keep in mind that as much food and clothing will be consumed at a fair price as at an unduly low price.

So the man can not be left out of the problem. And that is something that you must never forget. There would be no supply of farm products at all except for the intelligent work of the farmers. From their partnership with the earth flow these assets that we all value so highly. Supply is a human product, not a natural growth like breadfruit. It must be adjusted and regulated at all times to the demand, but only at a price that is fair to both par-

ties to the trade, not a temporary over-supply at times to force prices down, nor a scarcity at others to force prices up. The plea is that these adjustments should be made by the farmers, inasmuch as the supply is theirs, and they are the only ones that can make the adjustment in a way to benefit all. And in making it they must consider, first of all, the cost of production—that is, what they pay for corn, wheat and cotton, fruit, vegetables, dairy and poultry products, etc., in investments, toil, pain, abstinence and self-sacrifice. We see how it is in other departments of industry. Wages are regulated, we may say, by the law of supply and demand. Yet trade-unions control, to no small extent, the number of laborers—thus regulating the supply. And they strain themselves to the uttermost to keep the supply of laborers small enough to insure good wages. The capitalist, on the other hand, determines to a considerable extent the amount of capital available for the payment of wages, and endeavors to lessen the competition for laborers. Both these classes influence, in a marked degree, both supply and demand. Why should not the farmer do the same?

So do not allow yourselves to be deceived by the talk about supply and demand. What you have to decide is whether you are getting prices properly proportionate to the cost of production. It is clear that often you do not. Indeed, cost of production is the last thing that you, and those who buy from you, take into account. If wheat at one dollar only

sufficiently compensates you, it is evident that wheat at fifty cents does not. There is no natural or economic reason for such fluctuations. They have a bad effect in many ways. Who can make any definite calculation on such a basis as this? Here is the secret of the failure of many farmers to make needed improvements. The owner is afraid to undertake improvements for fear prices will fall, and he may not be able to pay for them. What would you think of a manufacturing business which sold plows this year for fifteen dollars, but which was haunted by the fear that, the cost of production remaining precisely the same, it might have to sell plows next year for seven dollars? The business simply could not go on. It would be impossible for the proprietor to figure on prices, wages or raw material. Profits would be as uncertain and problematical as they now are in the farming business. It is so in farming, which, after all, is manufacturing. The farmer is capitalist, laborer, manufacturer, scientist and landowner, so that all the forces of production are combined in him. The earth is his factory, the plant food his raw material, the plant his machine, and the crop his finished product. Yet, though he is the supreme producer, and though all the forces of production center in him, he is, under present conditions, the most powerless of all producers, and the only one who takes no account of the cost of production. Is it not time that he asserted himself? He must quit increasing the supply extravagantly and to his

own hurt, and insist that the price at which he sells shall be such as to earn him a fair profit, year in and year out, over and above the cost of production. He can not do this by himself. So here, again, organization is absolutely necessary.

To illustrate more forcibly the need of regulating prices, we will say that, always, the larger the crops the lower the prices. Frequently the largest crops sell for the least bulk money, and vice versa, the smallest crops bring the farmers the most money. This is proven in the corn crop of 1901. It was the smallest this country raised for many years, yet it brought to the farmers more money than any other corn crop except the one of 1902. This latter crop was the largest ever raised; it had the advantage of high price established by the preceding shortest crop, yet sold for comparatively little more than the short one. This condition is also illustrated by potatoes. In 1895 this country raised the largest crop in its history, and they sold for only about half the money as did the crop of 1901, which was the smallest for many years. The same is true of wheat, oats, cotton, fruit and other crops. An enterprise which is subject to such wide, violent irregularities can not be healthy, and a system which makes them possible is bad and vicious. Any person who will take the trouble to study the crop statistics will be convinced that something is wrong. It is clear from this showing that it is the large crops and low prices that are a menace to the farmers—consequently the nation's

prosperity. Short crops will make good prices for themselves, as then the buyers go to the farm seeking them, and the farmers can price them.

By organization and cooperation the temporary surplus of any crop can be controlled—held on the farm—and the same conditions produced as when the crop is small. All that is necessary to do to make prices on the farm is to control that part, which, at times, overstocks the market, and which fixes prices on all. In other words, to keep the market in a seeking condition. We claim that as much of our food products will be consumed at a fair price to the farmer as at an unfairly low price. The cities are fairly reveling in prosperity. Labor is better paid now than ever before; manufactured goods sell higher than ever before. Therefore, the consumers off of the farm should pay a fair price for their food, even though it leaves them a little less for luxuries; but we don't believe it will be necessary for the consumer to pay more. The advent of the Third Power will beneficially affect distribution of farm products and cut down the mountains of profits realized by unfair middlemen between the producers and consumers. The success of the farmers' movement will guarantee an equitable price to the farmers, a fair margin to the middleman, lower prices to the consumer, and a larger market for all farm products. By removing the uncertainties of prices, encouraging free buying and selling on certain and legitimate

margins, greater consumption will result, again benefiting the farmers.

This matter of making prices on farm products is the most important problem before the people of the world. It directly affects half the population of our country (about forty million people) and many other millions in Europe and other countries. As the United States is the great surplus producing country, it can make prices on food products for the world. It has done it in the past, and has set the price too low. The result has been, our farmers are the poorest paid of all laborers in this country, and the European farmers are paupers. Through the Third Power operating through the American Society of Equity prices can be set on an equitable basis, the American farmer will rise to an equality with the best business men of the nation, his profession will be above any other, and the European farmers will rise proportionally.

This is the time for action, not for longer submission. Unless the farmers accept this opportunity I believe the opportunity will pass and a land trust be formed which will forever make it impossible for the rank and file of American farmers to own and keep a portion of God's green earth, but they will be ground down to serfdom indeed.

CHAPTER VIII

MARCH OF EQUITY

Face about and turn to freedom,
Shout our blessing o'er the land!
Lift our flag of Equity,
Show the emblem's triumph band!
Convert foes or turn them under,
Here is Equity for all;
Let the light of this transcription
Conquer prices to our call!

Free our farmers, free our farmers,
From the harmers of their price;
We are striving, merchants thriving—
Now we want our proper slice!
We will make it, we will break it,
With a wise man as our guide;
Star is over Power the rover,
Now we'll conquer ev'ry side!

—*Pearl Udilla Davis.*

Perhaps it has not been made sufficiently clear that organization is necessary to accomplish the results desired. It has been shown that the farmers ought to organize, and that organization is the law of the industrial and commercial world, and that in other businesses organization has been found to be necessary. Further it has been argued that farming is a business quite as truly as manufacturing, and that

the same laws govern both. It has been insisted, too, that unorganized power has little chance in the world at the present time, and that unity of action is necessary to make power felt. Yet some may ask whether it may not be possible, admitting that organization is desirable, for the farmers to better their condition, in the ways indicated, by their own individual efforts. This, at least, raises the question as to the scope of organization, for few will maintain that anything could be done without some combination. How extensive should it be? If you will stop to think about the matter you will see that if the farmers of one county, or even of one state or section should agree to market only at a fair price they not only would fail to accomplish much, but they would put themselves in great peril. What would it profit the Indiana farmers to adopt this course while the farmers of other states were rushing their crops to market to be sold at whatever price was offered?

Suppose there were two stores in your county town, and that the proprietor of one of them should make up his mind that the price of dry goods was too low, and that he would not sell to any one except at an advance of fifty per cent., and suppose that the proprietor of the other store should keep on selling at the old price. Obviously the latter man would get all the trade, and the former would have to meet his price or go out of business. If the anthracite coal men were in a combination, would it be possible for any one of them to raise the price of coal as long

as one kept on selling steadily at the old price? Clearly not. The lowest price asked for a commodity must be the prevailing price, for the reason that the buyers will pay no higher price than the lowest at which goods can be secured.

It is precisely so with the farmers. Recently the announcement was made that the farmers of Indiana seemed to be holding on to their wheat, and the question was asked whether attempts to organize them under the banner of "dollar wheat" were meeting with success. One of the millers said:

"It is a simple proposition which Indiana farmers will face if they withhold their wheat from the market. Other producers will supply the urgent demand and the holders will be glad to get what they can for their wheat after the others have sold out. The question resolves itself into the old one of supply and demand."

The supply and demand question has already been discussed, but on the main point the miller is right.

A combination of Indiana farmers can not fight against freely sold wheat in other sections of the country. Another miller said that he had no doubt that there was a combined effort on the part of Indiana farmers to withhold their wheat, but he said, and truly, "Indiana farmers can not control the market here as long as we can buy elsewhere at the same price." But suppose they could not buy elsewhere?

And this was the condition they met, but they did not want to admit it: Farmers were holding to a great extent in all the states, yet without sufficient organization and cooperative ability to force the price to the dollar mark quickly. The millers, however, would not admit it, and the statements made were calculated to stampede the farmers and cause them to market more freely. This occurred in August, 1903, and the farmers did produce a condition that fully justified dollar wheat by withholding supplies and decreasing the visible to the lowest point in many years. The speculators, however, were determined to hold the price down and defeat the farmers. Every bear argument that could be found, real or imaginary, was brought to bear. Another reason why prices were so strenuously held down was the fact that the 1903 wheat crop was sold out by the speculators around sixty-five cents a bushel in the spring when prospects were so flattering and a nine-hundred-million-bushel crop was predicted; also millers contracted flour that would keep their mills grinding for months. It was to the interest of these speculators and millers to keep the price down as low as possible until they could fill their contracts. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that the combination, to be effective, must include a large number of farmers. The temporary surplus of any crop must be controlled; that is, a surplus must not appear at any time. I estimate that one million farmers will be sufficient. This is only a comparatively small

portion of them, but this number cooperating through one central head can, I believe, fully control the surplus of any crop this country produces, and fix the price equitably for all farmers in this country, and on staples like wheat, corn, oats, cotton, and meat, set the price for the world.

The Grange and Alliance had millions of members; therefore, if farmers organized before, they can again, if there is a good reason for it. The reason is more urgent now than ever before, also, the plan is so much more practical and the objects so much better, that I contend if the farmers will organize once more, they will realize such great benefit that they will never disorganize. And it is such an organization as this that it is proposed to form. Also, we expect, after the million members are secured for the American Society of Equity, other millions will come, until its growth will be stopped because there is no more material to grow upon.

The farmers' organization must be strong enough and general enough to regulate the marketing. The question is not one of holding products, but of selling them. The proposition is that they shall be held only for the purpose of securing a fair price. In a word, the farmers must make a seeking market, instead of dumping their fine, valuable products without system, like in the case of bankrupt stocks.

Incidentally, something may be said about the ability of the United States to control prices of agricultural products. It is a fact, that, do the best they

can, the other producing countries of the world of bread grains never have enough to supply the demand. Every year Europe requires about two hundred millions of bushels of wheat from this country. Without this, values in the thickly populated countries of Europe would probably rise to fabulous prices, and we predict famines would be frequent. Claims may be made that production in other countries can be greatly increased. In some cases this is true, but at the same time population and consumption will be increasing. Consumption has been increasing for a few years, faster than production. Witness the fact that three years ago this country had a visible supply of forty-seven million bushels, while at this writing (August, 1903) it is down to twelve millions. The same proportions held true in foreign countries. This in face of the fact that the crop of wheat in 1902 was the largest ever grown, and in 1901 was nearly as large. The figures clearly prove that consumption has been greater than production for the last three years, even when production was unprecedentedly large. We can not hope to keep up the recent rate of production of bread grain except through more intensive farming or the opening of new territory. This latter is problematic. But suppose the area could be augmented by another empire equal in size and productive ability to our Mississippi valley. Has not all our central west and northwest been put under cultivation within the memory of present men? Has not the world

consumed the products? Are we likely to have such an increase in producing area in the next generation? I say no. In short, to supply the food for future generations, will require intensive farming. This means organization, cooperation and better prices, so our present farms can be brought up in fertility to produce double or triple the present low averages.

To talk of foreign countries exporting wheat or other products to this country is absurd, even though prices were made higher here. The more likely result, in fact the inevitable result, will be for foreign farmers to put their price up to meet those of the United States. European farmers are more for cooperation than are the American farmers, and they will be glad to embrace the first opportunity to get rid of the competition of this country, in setting cheap prices. Besides, it is proposed to organize this society in all foreign countries. Thus, we will have the Russian Society of Equity, the German Society of Equity, etc. Already the movement is under way in the surplus producing countries of food crops, and great interest is shown in Europe in the plan that will enable them to cooperate with the American farmers to make equitable prices.

But suppose it was not possible to retain the foreign markets on wheat—our principal export grain—and our farmers were confined to the home market, the tariff tax of twenty-five cents a bushel will shut out foreign wheat until the home price reaches one

dollar and nine cents per bushel, on the basis of eighty-four cents, an exportable basis, and this would be a big lift. But if farmers will organize and get a profitable price for all their crops, I predict one of the first results will be decreased production of grain crops. With profitable prices assured, farmers would not need to put out as large crops as in the past. With farming removed from the old system when labor was the only factor that earned anything and the person who worked the hardest and the most hours in the fierce competitive struggle was the one who made the most, the tendency will be to not work so hard and cut down the acreage. At all events a short crop at a profitable price is always better than a bumper crop at a losing price.

This country produces nearly all the corn of the world, and is the only one that has the soil and climate to grow the crop successfully on a large scale. On this crop we can surely dictate to the world.

There need be no fear about our market. The world needs—must have—our surplus and will pay a fair price for it when it learns that it can not get it at an unfair price, nor will the Argentine or Russian exporters be able to beat the American farmers, when the farmers in those countries are also organized in the Equity society.

Do you not begin to see how powerful and beneficent this organization will be? Already the Chicago speculators have been heard crying for wheat. They can have all they want, but after the farmers' organ-

ization is completed, only at prices made by it. And the work has only begun. You are asked simply to conduct your business as other business is conducted at the present time. It has been said that the twentieth century farmer is a business man. It is for him to show it. The opportunity will be offered to him. A definite aim—dollar wheat and fair prices for all other crops—will be placed before him. We are to see whether he, like other business men, is able to get what he goes after. To say that he can not do this is to impeach his intelligence. Other men have no difficulty in seeing what is for their own good, nor will the farmer have. If others can organize, he can organize—and he can be true to his organization, especially when he would injure himself by being false to it. There will, of course, be predictions of failure, as there have been already, but they will come from the enemies of the farmer—from those who flatter him by telling him that he is a business man and yet want him to act as though he were a child or a fool. But such criticisms are the surest indications of success. If the movement were hopeless or weak there would be no objections to it. The fact that there are objections to it on the part of those interested in defeating it, proves that it is practical and powerful. The people at large, who love fair play, will support the movement when they fully understand it.

CHAPTER IX

THE FARMERS' FUTURE RHYME

The dawn of light is breaking
To quiet farmers' fears;
The sons of toil are awaking
To enjoy peaceful, happy years.

Then all that want protection,
Here is the way, you plainly see:
Don't continue competition,
But join the A. S. of E.

—*W. R. Freeman,* Woodville, Mich.

Undoubtedly one great, and probably unsurmountable, obstacle that has hitherto stood in the way of any effective and lasting organization of farmers by any of the plans tried, has been the isolation of the agricultural class. When towns were few and widely scattered, means of communication meager, and when the nearest neighbor was dozens, or even scores, of miles away and without any means in the organization for frequent communication, the farmer could, in the nature of things, know little of what was going on in the world, could have few or no relations with other farmers. Lacking knowledge of the lives of others, he lacked sympathy. There was no sense of relationship or interdepend-

ence. Men in the same county were farther apart then than are men now in widely severed states. Now, organization implies some closeness of touch. Men must know something of one another; care something for one another; have common interests and also a realization of the fact that their interests are the same.

A few illustrations will serve. Capital can combine easily because capital moves freely from one point to another. It can be, and is, handled in large masses. A dollar in Indiana is as close of kin to a dollar in New York as is the nearest neighbor of the New York dollar. Laboring men even yet find it difficult to migrate from one section to another, but capital flows freely to the place where there is the greatest demand for it. Distance is no barrier—the ocean is no barrier. A man may live in Kansas and have his capital working for him in the Philippines or in Wall Street. The natural tendency of capital is toward combination. And it knows nothing of isolation. Turning to labor we find that labor combinations are easily effected because laboring men live in cities, and close together. Thousands of them work in the same factory or on the same railroad. They meet constantly and talk over things affecting their condition. It is natural and easy for them to cooperate; indeed, they can hardly help doing so. Each man feels—and he would feel it whether there were an organization or not—that he is the member of a vast body, and he gets the daily encouragement

of touching elbows constantly with his fellow-soldiers. Thus there is this sense of unity independent of the organization itself. He knows that others are interested in him as he is in others. Combination and concert of action could not but come. And it was easy because the laboring men were close together.

It has been different on the farm. The farmer, to be sure, knew that there were millions of others engaged in the same occupation as his, but he never saw them, knew nothing about them, and he could hardly help feeling that he was a lone skirmisher, not certain whether he would be supported by the main body or not. He worked for himself as others did for themselves, and, as a consequence, each was subjected to the severest competition from the others. Community of interest was not thought of. Combination seemed unnatural, and so, impossible. The conditions implied division and separation. Isolation was the bar to organization. But now all this is changed, and henceforth the tendency will be strong in the direction of combination. The rural delivery, the telephone, the interurban trolley, good roads, the wider diffusion of books and papers, the growth of cities and towns throughout the rural region, have all served, and will increasingly serve, to bring the farmers closer together. The farmer can get to town every day now, whereas twenty-five years ago he could not, or did not, do so once a week or once a month. He meets his neighbors in socie-

ties and institutes, where they discuss subjects of interest to all. He, too, feels the touch of the elbow on each side of him, and knows that millions of others are fighting the same battle that he has to fight, and that they can fight it best by combining forces. Rural America is to-day one vast neighborhood with interests in common from ocean to ocean, and the American Society of Equity is specially constructed to promote good fellowship and cooperative industrial development.

So we hear from all sides talk of organization. This means that organization is felt to be both a necessity and a possibility. When men—at least when Americans—are brought together the first thing they think of is organization. No people that ever lived had such a capacity as the Americans have for concerted action. In the present case, men have not proposed to organize the farmers simply because they thought it would be well to do so, but because they saw that conditions invited organization. This is the way in which great and successful movements always come. Prophets and seers may dream of wonderful things, but if they are in advance of their time, they try to accomplish them and fail, or, despairing of success, they attempt nothing. The centuries roll by, and at last, in the fulness of time, the man and the hour coincide and then the world takes a tremendous step in advance. Only the other day a man wrote a book on submarine navigation. He showed that inventors had been busy with the prob-

lem for centuries, and that one boat had been built three hundred years ago, which actually did travel a short distance under water under propulsion of oars. But the writer said that this inventor could do little simply because he had outstripped the possibilities of the science of his day. Steam navigation was then two hundred years in the future. Even thirty years ago submarine boats were looked on as impracticable—Jules Verne writing fancifully of a trip under the sea as he did of a journey to the moon or the center of the earth. Now the problem is solved, not because the men of our day first thought of solving it, but because science had advanced sufficiently to enable them to solve it—had given them the materials to work with. Much the same thing is true of aerial navigation. It is so of reform movements. Even the Christian religion could not have spread so rapidly had it not been that the world was prepared for it. The Romans had built the roads over which missionaries traveled, had welded mankind together, had established peace, law and order throughout the civilized world, and created a system of government that was marvelous for its efficiency.

The moral is plain. Every influence that can be named is operating to bind the farmers together. Railroads, the telegraph, the wonderful extension of the telephone service, the rural mail service, the trolley roads, the growth of towns in proximity to the farm, the spread of education, the development of

the scientific side of farming, the multiplication of agricultural schools and farm journals, the work of the agricultural department of the government, the settling up of the country, and, above all, *the right plan has been devised.* And these will combine to knit the farmers closely together, to destroy the old isolation, and to make the farmers themselves see that organization is as natural and easy in their case as in the case of the city laborers, manufacturers and others. And now, with every condition favoring, the *American Society of Equity* has arrived. Those who have dreamed of an organization of the farmers may now see their dream realized. The new society is not an artificial thing imposed on a civilization not ready for it. On the contrary, it is the outgrowth of the very same influences which have wrought such marvelous changes in the condition of the farmer. As the close association which the working men have with one another inevitably suggested organization, so organization will be suggested to the farmer by the closer associations that now exist between him and his fellow farmers. Isolation will yield, as it has done already to some extent, more and more to combination, and the farmers, united and acting together for the good of each and all, will no longer be conquered in detail by other classes. Instead of ignorantly and unconsciously carrying on a guerrilla warfare against one another, they will henceforth cooperate loyally and

effectively for the improvement of the agricultural situation.

Who dare predict that farmers can not and will not stand by each other in a great national body for business benefits? He might as well attempt to deny that millions of farmers have not been loyal to the great political parties, Republican and Democratic, these many years. If the farmers will rally to the support of their party in politics as often as called upon will they not be faithful to themselves in a business body? The farmers united in the great American Society of Equity will each find a brother at his elbow on the right and on the left who is wearing the badge, "For Profitable Prices." They all have common interests. When they are called upon by headquarters to express themselves on any matter it will appeal to them even more than politics. The appeal will not be ambiguous. What they will be asked to do will be for their benefit. Their self-interests will be appealed to and why should they do otherwise than cast their vote in favor of their own interests? If the farmers are told to ask a fair price for cotton, wool, wheat, corn, oats, potatoes, eggs, milk, butter, tobacco, vegetables, fruit, hogs, cattle, etc., and each farmer knows that the word goes out to the millions of other farmers all over the broad land, do you suppose they would do the contrary thing? Or if we will admit that all will not obey,—some because they can not stop marketing,—there will still be enough in this great body to control the

marketing and make the price. All that will be necessary is to stop marketing, wherever the buyers will not pay your price. In other words, to supply the goods as the markets need them, and not dump them in uncertain quantities at uncertain times. The system of marketing the bulk of a crop soon after it is produced results in creating a large *visible supply*, which is used as a club ever after to beat down prices for the balance of the year. Speculators understand this to perfection. The clubs of "visible supply" and "daily receipts" are the bears' leading arguments. The farmers can prevent a large visible supply by keeping the produce back on the farm and let it come forward gradually during twelve months. And if they will sell only when they get the agreed price the buyers will look out for the daily receipts. When considering this matter of prices and marketing, farmers should always keep in mind this fact: That the world will consume as much of your products at a fair, profitable price as at an unprofitable price.

CHAPTER X

The dawn of light is breaking,
The darkness disappears,
The sons of toil are waking
To drive away their fears.
Let all be up and working
With all their might and main,
To make our union lasting
And all the youths to train.

The work is now before us,
Let's up and at it strong.
Let not a member falter
To push the work along.
Let every one unite
With shoulder to the wheel,
And carry the heavy load aright
That all may happy feel.

When to our homes we do return,
Our hearts are light and free
To know we have our honors earned
And made our brothers see.
Come brothers, sisters, all,
United now we stand.
Come heed our leaders' call
And make a firm, strong band.

Something has been said of the influence of agricultural schools and papers, which is undoubtedly good as far as it goes. But it does not go far

enough, and there is need here for reform. The whole purpose of those who teach agriculture as a science is, of course, to develop the scientific side of the business, and to teach the farmers how to make their land as productive as possible. This is well, but it must be remembered that what the farmer wants to produce is not crops, but money—or crops as a means of getting money. His aim is, or should be, to make his farm productive, but productive of money. To this end he should practise the economies that other business men practise, making extensive use of machinery, keeping his soil in good condition, studying the question of crops and their rotation, observing the markets; in short, trying to raise as big crops as possible are commendable, but, after all these are done, there is something more important. It is the profitable market. It is one that, in justice to the farmer, ought not to be overlooked by any of the teachers, speakers or experimenters.

The only people who profit more from a large crop than a small one are the consumers, railroad men, middlemen, and the speculators. The railroads charge as much for hauling a cheap bushel as a dear one, and the more bushels there are the better it is for them. The same way with the speculator and middleman. Cheap and abundant wheat is quite as profitable for speculative purposes as dear and scarce wheat. The farmer's prosperity, on the other hand, depends on both the price and the quantity. As the

freight is the same on the cheap as on the dear bushel, it is evident that a larger proportion of the price goes to the railroad in the former than in the latter case, to the reduction of the farmer's profit. So the question is much more complex than it seems to be on its face.

Suppose by the application of improved methods the average of wheat per acre could be raised from twelve to thirty bushels, and this is exactly what a professor of the Indiana Agricultural Experiment Station said the farmers could and should do, by coming to them and learning how. This on the same acreage as now would mean a yield of more than 2,000,000,000 bushels instead of 700,000,000. Under present conditions the effect on price would be most depressing. No one can say how far the price would fall, but it is certain that the farmer would get less profit for the large crop than he now gets, even at the present moderate price, for the smaller one. While it is not possible to increase any of our crops so enormously as in this illustration, it will serve to show the folly of the farmers' institutions, teaching how to raise large crops without the ability to put profitable prices on them. Better devote their efforts to teaching them how to raise less; as under present systems, if each farm would raise uniformly less, so as to always make a hungry market, our farmers would revel in prosperity. Better yet would be to join in the educational work and teach them

how to get a good price for a large crop as well as for a small one.

The farmer is more interested in the question of price now than in quantity of crop. However, with the ability to fix profitable prices on the farm, and prevent a surplus from appearing on the market at any one time, it will be practically impossible to raise a surplus of any of our crops for many years. As we have shown, profitable prices will curtail production at first, rather than stimulate it, while population and consumption will go on increasing. Those who advise the farmer to raise larger crops and to make his land more fruitful, without the ability to fix prices, are, therefore, unsafe advisers, and unconsciously have been playing into the hands of the transportation companies, middlemen, and speculators.

By all means the farmer should adopt scientific, up-to-date methods, but he should apply them to the marketing of his crops, as well as to the raising of them. Scientific business as well as scientific agriculture is needed. The crop in which the farmer is most interested is the crop of money. It is for that that he works. He does not want to raise crops simply for the sake of raising them. He raises them to sell. The money that he gets for them is his living. The bigger the crop the better, of course, provided the price be right. But, and here is the point, the bigger the crop, the greater is the necessity that the farmer should control the sale of it.

Under the present free competitive system, a big crop may be, and frequently is, anything but a blessing to the man that grows it. When the crop is small it, in a measure, takes care of itself, even as things are to-day. It is when his fields are most fruitful and the conditions most favorable that the farmer is likely to find himself swamped by the very plenteousness of his yield. I have made the assertion that the short crops of 1901 were responsible directly and indirectly in bringing more prosperity to the farmers than any other crop they ever raised. Really they, the farmers, get their blessings in disguise.

Thus it appears that the very instruction that is being given at our agricultural schools, experiment stations, farmers' institutes and by farm papers makes further instruction necessary. When you teach a man how to grow the largest possible crop on a given acreage, and press on him the necessity of doing so, you put yourself under obligation to show him how he may best deal with the products which he has raised in such abundance. Without this latter instruction the former may be worse than useless—nay, may be positively harmful. This is a subject to which our schools and papers ought to give their attention. Certainly the farmers should think about it very seriously. When you increase largely the output, you, of necessity—other conditions remaining the same—depress the price, unless you can control the marketing. A community or

country will, however, consume as much at a fair price as at a low price. A fair price appears to add dignity to a commodity, and make it more desired. Besides, if we can keep the farmers prosperous by giving them good prices, we can keep the world prosperous, thus stimulating consumption.

The present average yield of wheat is in the neighborhood of thirteen bushels an acre, and at that average the country can produce about 650,000,000 bushels. That is enough at the present time to supply the needs of our own people, and to furnish a quantity for export. Whether it would pay the farmer to raise more under the old conditions, depends entirely on the price he could get for it. A short crop at a high price might bring him more money than a large crop at low prices. This condition has frequently prevailed. In fact it is the rule that the smallest crops sell for more money than the largest ones.

So the question is whether the price of the large crop, though lower than that received for the small crop, is still high enough to enable the farmer to make at least as much money net on his investment. If it is not, he loses. This question of the ratio between quantity and price is of vital importance, and the ratio is one that is easily disturbed and thrown out of joint. He would be a bold man who, understanding the matter, tells the farmer that he ought to raise more than he is now raising, and the farmer who will listen to such teaching without a protest

does not deserve a better fate than has been his portion in the past. Yet the whole object of so-called scientific instruction in farming is to induce the farmer to do just that thing.

But the farmer will not forget the question of price. The American Society of Equity is not going to let him forget it. This is the first and great object of the society. It is the stepping-stone to the accomplishment of the Third Power. The society is willing to cooperate with the schools by showing the farmer how to market and by helping him to market profitably the larger crops which he is being taught to raise. The two things—up-to-date farming and up-to-date business—must go together. No sane manufacturer makes more goods than he thinks he can sell profitably, or increases his facilities beyond what he believes to be the power of his customers or possible customers to consume. He does not put in new and elaborate machinery simply that he may increase his output—whether he does that depends on the condition of the market, and his ability to control prices—but that he may produce more cheaply and thus, if need be, to sell more cheaply, yet make more money. It should be so with the farmer. He must never forget the question of price, and must ever remember that the product which he is after is not corn or wheat or cotton, or pork or beef, but *gold*. He who gets the most gold out of his grounds is the most successful, up-to-date and scientific farmer.

Good prices for farm products means increased prosperity, and increased prosperity means greater consumption. The element of waste alone of food and clothing when people are prosperous is a great item, and will have an important bearing on the farmers' markets and prices.

CHAPTER XI

All hail the cause of Equity!
Let all the nation ring
With glad huzzas from wakened hearts,
That blithesome tribute bring.
In honor of the dawn of truth,
Of justice, fair and right;
For farmers who so patiently
Have waited for the light.

That light is swiftly coming now;
It spreads along the way,
And brightens all the world about
With its hope-giving ray.
Soon, soon the day of right shall glow,
In splendor through the land,
When every farmer lad shall march
In Equity's fair band.

Such are some of the needs of the farmer. It has been shown that they can be satisfied only through organization, and it must now be inquired whether the American Society of Equity is the sort of an organization that the situation demands. A consideration of the subjects that it proposes to accomplish will at least prove that its founder intends it to do the work which it has been said must be done, if the farmer is to wield the power that he should wield. The objects that it aims at are precisely the ones

that have already been put before the reader. The very first thing proposed is, that the farmer should "obtain profitable prices for *all* farm products, including grain, fruit, vegetables, stock, cotton, and their equivalents." It has been shown that the farmers oftentimes do not obtain fair prices for these products, and that such prices can not be obtained without organization among the farmers. This is the theory on which the American Society of Equity is based. That organization can do this it has been the purpose of this argument to demonstrate. That the American Society of Equity can do it follows necessarily, if the argument already made is sound, for it is based on principles that have been set forth in the preceding pages.

But there are certain details connected with this question of price that need further exposition. In order to get a fair price it has to be proved that the farmers are under no necessity of selling their crops at irregular intervals and in uncertain quantities, and this involves two questions: First: Can the farmers hold them? and second: Have they the facilities for holding them? It is insisted that few farmers are driven to the necessity of selling their crops to the first purchaser that offers, for the farmers are even now the most completely self-supporting class in the country. Many of them have been asked, "Why do you sell your crops now?" and the answer almost invariably is, "I have found from experience that the price is about as high now as it will be at any time,

so I let it go." That is, they do not sell because they have to, but because they are disgusted with former attempts to hold and the results. They exercise a free choice, and they choose to sell because they think they can make as much money by selling as by holding. Undoubtedly this is the true reason in the majority of cases for their haste to get rid of their crops. The farmers think that the price, though not good, is as good as they can hope to get, and they fear that they may get caught in a decline. So they let go and then complain that farming does not pay. But do you stop to consider that somebody holds these crops—your wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, poultry, butter, eggs, fruit, tobacco, cotton, meat, etc. The world don't consume them—gulp them down—as soon as you let go of them. They go into elevators, cold storage houses, packing houses, etc. There they are held by comparatively few individuals until the hungry consumer wants them, when they come forth with profits added. The present system of marketing by farmers is similar to that of throwing bankrupt stocks on the market. And the farmers adhere to it, not because they like it, but because they have no better way. The purpose of the American Society of Equity is to point to and provide a better way. And as the farmers are free agents, they can tread that way if they choose to do so.

The other question is as to the ability of the farmers to hold their crops. This, too, is answered by the American Society of Equity. For another of its

objects is "to secure equitable rates of transportation, and to provide for storage in warehouses." There has always been more or less strife between the farmers and the railroads and the elevator interests, and in that strife the farmers usually lose. Of late co-operative societies have been formed in the western and northwestern states, the object of which is to enable the farmers to store and ship their own grain. As a rule they have been successful and profitable. These associations can easily affiliate with the American Society of Equity, and with the ability to control prices, as well as to save the grain trusts' profit and get equitable rates of transportation, they will be in a very enviable position. Without the ability to make equitable—profitable—prices, they will still be at the mercy of the trusts, speculators and gamblers. And without the power to hold the grain, prices can not be fixed. Thus the two things must go together. I claim the best place to hold grain is on the farm in a good safe, vermin-proof granary. The farmer then has no elevator charges to pay, which in public elevators is about one cent a month and eight cents a year. This is a heavy tax, and is about sufficient to build an elevator, if used to its capacity, in a year. The next best way is to have a community elevator. Several local unions of the A. S. of E. will join together and erect it. And beyond this it is the design of the society to have large elevators in the leading market cities, under the management of the National Union, where grain will be stored for members at

lowest rates. Cold storage houses will serve a similar purpose and on the same system for perishable products. Individual members can store their fruit, poultry, or dairy products, meat, etc., in the local union line of storage houses, or consignments from local union or large individual producers will be received in the National Union storage houses. In this way the produce can be taken care of, the market supplied regularly with what it needs, and uniformity of prices maintained throughout summer and winter. The producers will be benefited by higher prices and the consumers benefited by lower prices, because the mountains of greedy profits that are now added by unfair middlemen and food trusts will be cut out.

But you may ask, How are the poor farmers to hold their crops?

In the first place, it will not be necessary to hold all crops at any time, and those who do hold will make a better price for those who can not hold. Also our farms and farmers need the "rest cure," and will not work so hard with profitable prices in sight, thus reducing the crops.

Second, with the farmers organized and fixing a minimum (lowest) price dealers will see that they can not buy any cheaper, and there is a possibility that prices will be higher. Therefore, they will all want to buy all they can at the low price, and will put all their capital in the commodity as soon as the poor producers must sell. I predict that the market

would take more when this system is in force than will be offered.

Third, the society provides for those farmers who will hold their grain and other produce a rising market each month. This may be one-fourth or one-half, or one cent per bushel or hundredweight, depending on the commodity, kind of crop and the market. The advance will be sufficient to offset shrinkage, interest, etc. If there is a tendency to market too freely this monthly advance can be increased to make it profitable to hold. It is reasonable to believe that farmers will hold on to their crops if there is a certainty of making money by doing it. This monthly advance should be adjusted to a nicety, so it will not allow loss nor make a profit, but the inducement will be to maintain prices, which will result when twelve months' requirements are filled, by marketing one-twelfth of the annual crop each month.

Fourth, grain in a granary or elevator, produce in a storage house or property anywhere in evidence, establishes credit. If cash is wanted for pressing needs it can easily be raised on warehouse receipts, or on personal notes, at any financial institution.

Let me say right here that the American Society of Equity does not propose to loan money to its members unless it engages in the banking business later. Also we want to effectually explode the theory of maintaining profitable prices for farm products *by the use of money.* No individual, society, corporation, nor Russian government, nor United States

government can make and maintain profitable prices for farm products by the use of money, even though they had the treasure of these great nations to fall back upon. It would be possible to keep prices up for a while by the use of money, but remember, when a price is paid for a commodity that you can not consume yourself, you must find another party who will take it off of your hands *at a higher price,* and here is where the trouble comes. If the farmers' society would supply the money to take their crops at profitable prices it would be a great thing for the members as long as it lasted. They—the members—would not need to concern themselves about anything but to go back to the farm and raise as large crops as possible and turn them into their society, which must not only pay them a profitable price but find some other person to take them at a higher price. This is a sure way to run up an unwieldy surplus. The only way to handle this problem is to make each individual producer responsible for production and markets. If he produces too much he must take a lower price or hold it over to a season of less production on his own account. In this way he pays the penalty for his indiscretion. Also, if farmers will not sell at the equitable minimum price and foolishly hold out for a higher price, prevent the crops from going into consumption and run up a large surplus, the board of directors must declare a lower price, and thus they will suffer again for their stubbornness. The American Society of Equity does not stand for high

prices, but for equitable prices, believing that as large consumption will result at a profitable price to the producer as at an unprofitable price. It will as strenuously oppose holding for unfairly high prices as it opposes selling for unprofitably low prices.

How will the society secure money to build warehouses, etc.?

Farmers can do anything they want to do, or what they in equity should do, if they will organize and cooperate to put profitable prices on their products. Suppose they would want to build or buy elevators, cold storage houses, stock yards, telegraph systems, railroads, ship lines, make good county roads, etc., they could do all these things and not issue a bond, mortgage a property nor pay a cent out of their own pocket.

Suppose they would add a little extra to each principal crop they raise and cut it out of the middlemen's and trusts' profits. We have an illustration like the following:

Barley	119,000,000	bu.	at	10c per bu.	$11,000,000
Buckwheat	10,000,000	"	"	10c " "	1,000,000
Corn	2,666,000,000	"	"	10c " "	266,600,000
Oats	943,000,000	"	"	10c " "	94,300,000
Rye	25,000,000	"	"	10c " "	2,500,000
Wheat	658,000,000	"	"	10c " "	65,800,000
Potatoes	273,000,000	"	"	10c " "	27,300,000
Flaxseed	19,000,000	"	"	10c " "	1,900,000
Apples	175,000,000	"	"	10c " "	17,500,000
Hay	84,000,000	tons	"	$2.00 " ton	168,000,000
Cotton	4,717,000,000	lbs.	"	2c " lb.	94,340,000
Tobacco	868,000,000	"	"	5c " "	43,400,000
Swine	10,500,000,000	"	"	2c " "	210,000,000
Eggs	1,293,000,000	doz.	"	5c " doz.	54,650,000
Dairy products	281,600,000	dollars at 10 per cent. increase.			28,160,000
Total					$1,086,450,000

This, as you will allow, does not near cover all

the sources of income to the farm, and a like appreciation of value in other products would add additional millions to the total. Suppose this amount was to be expended for a few years, the farmer could own all the facilities for reporting their crops and markets, holding for advantageous prices and transporting them to markets.

Another way:

If it was not desired to raise money by an assessment on the crops, each member, when he is getting benefits such as this society will give, will willingly pay a few dollars a year to provide facilities for handling his business. With a membership of five million, an assessment of $10 each will raise a fund of fifty million dollars. If this amount is expended each year for five or ten years all the really necessary facilities will be provided. It is not, however, proposed to decide on the way to do these things now. But rather to organize and put the farmers in condition to do whatever they want to do when the time comes. Thus with no compulsion to sell, with facilities to store, with power to make prices, the farmers will be what they ought to be and now are in theory —independent.

But it is proposed to use this power fairly and honorably. It is not proposed to favor a high price, but simply a profitable price. And every one is entitled to a profitable price if he can get it. The question is how to get it. By the plan of the A. S. of E. no hardship will be imposed on any one, and the con-

sumers of farm products have nothing to fear. Indeed, it has already been shown that the whole country is interested in having the farmer get profitable prices. There need be no conflict of interest here.

What difference would it make to the consumer whether the price of wheat is eighty cents or a dollar a bushel? The average consumption of wheat is about five bushels per capita, or twenty cents increase per bushel is one dollar increase a year. This will be eight and one-third cents a month, or less than one-third cent a day. For a family of four persons a little more than one cent a day. The question is, however, whether bread would be dearer. I think present bakers' bread prices were made when wheat was higher, and they have not been put down. Also it is proposed to reduce the price of so many commodities when this society is in operation—notably meat—that the average will clearly be in favor of the consumer.

But suppose the establishment of the farmers' society and the Third Power would result in a slight advance in food. Wages have been increased out of all proportion to any advance that can result here. Also by giving the farmers a lift now along with the general industrial elevation we will be increasing his consuming powers for all manufactured goods, and for everything he can consume on the farm and in his family, thus benefiting the laborers in prospect of continued high wages. Also if we put the farmers in a position where each of them will keep one or

more hired men at union wages, the year around, which is what this movement means, we make a market for labor such as was never before dreamed of.

Is it necessary to illustrate this further? Is it not clear that if marketing was done systematically and the existing demand supplied, and no more, that prices can be maintained at equitable rates? The American Society of Equity, through its board of directors, will be the head or clearing house to the entire agricultural industry. Through the official paper and the press of the country this head will speak to every member weekly and give news about crops and crop prospects; advice about market and marketing. All the millions of farmers will have the same advice at the same time about the same things from an authentic head quite in contrast with the blind guessing as at present. All will thus be possessed of the same knowledge, influenced by the same motives, and they may act as one man—in short, cooperate—for the single purpose of securing the equitable minimum price.

The plan of the American Society of Equity is broad enough and comprehensive enough to care for every branch of agricultural effort—the grain grower, the stock feeder, the dairyman, the poultry man, the cotton grower, the tobacco grower, the fruit grower, etc. As soon as it is in operation it will benefit the largest operator, no difference in what line nor where situated, and also the owner of a few rods

of ground, by securing stability of price, which means stability of prosperity.

The plan is to recommend a minimum price at which staple crops shall be sold in leading or base markets. For instance, grain prices will be based on Chicago, cotton on New York or New Orleans, etc. Other markets and the farm prices will then be regulated by the base market. The farm price will be the base market price less transportation and cost of handling. Farmers whose produce does not go to the base market can calculate the freight from the principal market that receives their crops. This minimum value will be named each year when the crop is produced and will be equitable on the basis of production and consumption, lower in years of large crops than in years of small crops, but always a price that will protect the farmer. If speculators force the price over the minimum price the farmers may, of course, take it. Farmers will be expected, however, to stop marketing when the market will not take more at the minimum price. The minimum price will be the safety valve which will regulate the supply to the demand.

It must be understood that there has not been a genuine surplus of any farm crop produced in many years. All have gone into consumption. It is the temporary surplus that is responsible for low prices, and it is this temporary surplus that the farmers are expected to control in the American Society of Equity. We see illustrations nearly every day in

the market reports, when the visible of any crop increases considerably from free marketing the price goes down. When farmers stop marketing, prices go up. This is very clearly shown in the cattle markets. We reproduce from the Chicago Live Stock World as follows:

"Country shippers are surely not hurting cattle buyers by sending in little runs of cattle on days when more could be used at steady prices and piling up a glut on one or two days when prices go off ten to twenty-five cents and oftentimes worse.

"Here is the way it looks on paper:

Monday receipts.....	36,010, prices 10 @ 15c lower
Tuesday receipts.....	7,081, prices steady
Wednesday receipts..	25,174, prices steady
Thursday receipts.....	11,472, prices 10 @ 15c higher
Friday receipts.....	2,990, prices 10 @ 15c higher
Monday again.....	36,000, prices 10 @ 15c lower

"It ought not to be hard to figure out who gets the worst of this sort of a distribution of cattle."

But there are those who think that the farmers are getting fair prices now—and of course they do get fair prices sometimes. However, let us consider the case of wheat as typical. Is $1 too much? For the past fourteen years, from 1888 to 1902, the average price of wheat in Chicago was 76 2-3 cents. The average yield is less than thirteen bushels an acre. Taking thirteen bushels as a liberal average, it appears that during this time the farmer has realized $9.95 off each acre planted in wheat. This is for the use of an acre for one year, and must cover the cost of labor, of seed, of sowing, of care, of harvesting,

of twine, of threshing and of marketing. From this must further be deducted interest on investment, loss of fertility in the soil, wear and tear of machinery and operator's profit. It is such a price as this that is responsible for the farm laborer earning only twenty-six cents a day and that has put farmers in the very lowest class of laborers. Surely even those who hold that $1 is too high must admit that 76 2-3 cents is too low.

Thus it is that question of price is fundamental. We are all interested, not simply in the farmer, but in his land—which, in a sense, belongs to all of us. Rudyard Kipling, writing of the American, says:

> "An easy unswept hearth he lends
> From Labrador to Guadeloupe;
> Till elbowed out by sloven friends,
> He camps, at sufference, on the stoop."

It is so. We have been prodigal with our national domain, and we have invited people from all over the world to come here, take up land, and compete with those already in possession. And now we find that many of our farms are in an impoverished condition from long cropping, and the return from grain and other farm products is not sufficient to justify the expense of restoring the fertility. Farmers have truly sold their birthright for a mess of pottage. This is obviously a very serious matter, and it can only be dealt with by securing equitable prices for all farm products. The farmer should have $1 for

wheat this year (1903), and a proportionate price for all his other products. He can get these prices through the American Society of Equity, which is the organized Third Power.

CHAPTER XII

In council there is wisdom,
In union there is strength,
And by cooperation
We will succeed at length.
With a bold, united effort
We are sure to win the day,
When Equity shall triumph
And producers will have their way.

Now this is our condition,
Though a shameful tale to tell;
The speculator prices
The things we have to sell;
And when we want to purchase
Our purchases come high,
For the speculator prices
The things we have to buy.

Having spoken of the present dependence of the farmer on other classes, and having shown the effect of low prices on his consuming power, and also on his land, it seems necessary, before leaving this question of prices, to say a few words about the earnings of the farmer and present additional comparisons. There are many who tell him of his happiness, prosperity and independence. While there is no intention to make things appear worse than they are it is intended to put the exact truth before the farmer. The

census of 1900 shows that, taking all the farmers together, the average income per family during the census year was only $643, or only a little over $2 a day, counting 300 working days to the year. The average income of the families of other laborers was $1,146, or over $4 a day. Two and a third million of farmers' families had a yearly income of less than $200, while 4,000,000 families had an income of less than $400 each. Only one family in eight had an income of more than $800. If these figures are wrong then the census returns are wrong. Remember, they represent the *average* farmer.

Are farm prices equitable when two-thirds of the families on the farm are limited to an income of less than $400 a year each? For this they must work longer hours at the most exacting and wearisome labor, oftentimes under the most disagreeable conditions, while the laborers in towns and cities, who are largely engaged in producing the goods that the farmers buy, work short hours, under pleasant conditions, and receive three times the reward. Bradstreets has figured that manufacturers, with an investment of ten billion dollars, produce thirteen billions of products, while the farmer, with an investment of twenty billions, produces only five billions of products. In other words, the dollar of the manufacturer returns him $1.30 of products, while the dollar of the farmer returns him only 25 cents of products. Where is the equity when a dollar invested in one form of manufacturing returns five times as much

as in another? Is not James J. Hill, the railroad magnate, right when he says: "The time has come when the United States should take steps to strengthen the backbone of the country—the farming class," and James Wilson, our secretary of agriculture, when he says: "We can not do too much for our farmers"? Prices of farm products will never be maintained at profitable rates by the government, nor by buyers, nor by consumers. Uncertainty of values of farm products will never be at an end until, through national cooperation, farmers make their own prices on the farm.

When we consider the slight reward that the farmer gets for his labor we can understand why rural America is to-day largely the reflection of wasted efforts and hopes not realized. It should be a paradise of prosperous farms, beautiful homes, and happy, contented families. An equitable distribution of rewards will make it all this. Yet it is said that the farmer is responsible for the high prices which have recently prevailed. This is but an effort to shoulder off on him the burden which rightfully rests on the shoulders of the trusts and speculators. An illustration will serve to prove this. A bushel of wheat, for which the farmer may receive 72 cents in the Indianapolis market, will make forty pounds of flour, sixteen pounds of bran and four pounds of waste. The consumer pays 3 cents a pound for the flour, or $1.20, and the farmer buys the bran back at $22 a ton, or 19 cents. Here is a total of $1.39 produced

from an original value of 72 cents. It is thus seen that the farmer's wheat has doubled in price by the time it reaches the consumer. By the route of the bakery 50 to 100 per cent. more will be added. It is the same way with the farmer's meat, butter, eggs, fruit, vegetables, cotton, etc. The farmers are not responsible for the price consumers pay. They are not now and never were responsible for the high cost of living. And the consumers should rejoice at the thought that the farmers soon will be in a position, through the help of the American Society of Equity, to cut out the mountains of profit that have been raised between the producers and the consumers.

In the meantime it is important that the American people should know that both the price that the farmer gets and the price the consumer pays are made by organized speculators, trusts, middlemen and manufacturers. They say that prices are made by the law of supply and demand—which is the merest subterfuge. That law, under present conditions, is a myth and a fraud. It may be better called a machine erected by the boards of trade to work in an organized market, and directed against an unorganized source of supply. This machine is equipped with numerous levers, wheels and spigots. As you pull a lever of frosts, floods or drought, you reduce the supply, and prices go up. Turn a wheel of increased visible supply or open a spigot of favorable weather in the Argentine or elsewhere, and prices go down. And there are men who put in all their days and

nights pulling levers, turning wheels and opening spigots. And thus it is that the farmers and the consumers alike are robbed and squeezed.

We have seen that the farmer does not get high prices, that his annual average income is pitifully small, that the returns on his investment are meager, and that, not getting high prices for himself, he is not responsible for the high prices the consumer pays. And yet, confronting such a situation as this, all that the farmer asks is equity. Shall he not have it? Ought any man, with a proper sense of obligation to himself, to his family and to his country, to be satisfied with anything less than equity? Is it not what we all pretend to want for ourselves, and profess to be willing and eager to grant to others? The American farmer is very patient—proverbially so. He has been compared to Issachar, of whom we have this record in the Bible:

"Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between two burdens, and he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute."

Rest may be good, and the land may be pleasant, but he who consents to become "a servant unto tribute" will know little of what is good or pleasant. It is on the patience and docility of the farmer that the capitalists and politicians have traded. And even now they are predicting the failure of the American Society of Equity, because, as they say, the farmer is contented and happy, and don't need it. Are they

right? It is for the farmers themselves to say. If they want "rest" and would enjoy "pleasant" country that they have made their own, they must make up their minds that they will have to free themselves from "tribute," assert their rights as American citizens, and at the same time show that moderation of which we all boast by demanding only what is equitable. So the American Society of Equity offers them the means by which they can demand and secure fair prices.

The need of some such agency as this has been shown, and so far it appears that the American Society of Equity is thoroughly adapted to meet the emergency, inasmuch as its aims, as thus far pointed out, are just what those of the farmer should be. It will be shown as we proceed that the other objects in view are quite as important as those already described. For the present we have the assurance that the society proposes to secure, or enable the farmers to secure, a fair price for their products, and to cooperate with them in securing facilities for holding or marketing products and in getting equity from those with whom they deal.

CHAPTER XIII

Then awake ye honest farmers,
Producers one and all,
And let us be united,
For divided we must fall.
Now a better day is dawning,
When producers will be free,
For Equity is coming
Through our grand A. S. of E.

Through Equity we'll conquer,
No other way we can,
For in Equity we acknowledge
The brotherhood of man.
In Equity there's justice,
True principle of right;
Then let us join together,
And work with all our might.

There is not one thing that the American Society of Equity proposes to do that does not bear directly on the question of price. As we have seen, it is intended to secure equitable rates for transportation. The price he is to ask is the minimum price that he may decide is fair in some selected market, and then deduct from that the fair cost of transporting and handling the products. When the minimum price is decided upon then the smaller the amount he has to deduct on this account the more will there be left for

the farmer. With reasonable rates, and with his crops stored in elevators or warehouses owned by the American Society of Equity, or local unions of the same, so much larger will be the profits of the farmer. So the plan is to increase his income both by raising prices and by lowering the cost of moving, handling and marketing the crops. This latter, however, is more in the interest of the consumer. What matters it to the farmer whether the middlemen or railroad charge 50 cents a bushel or $1 a cwt. for carrying his produce to market? In his fundamental position he puts his price on the absolutely necessary articles of food and clothing before any other person or corporation can touch them. Therefore, he takes his profit—all that he wants or in equity should have—first. You can not fail to realize the strength of position of the farmer, when organized, by this illustration. Therefore, it is mainly to protect the consumer and secure the maximum market that he, through his society, will interest himself in the elevator charges, railroad rates, taxes, insurance and a thousand other things. None of these things can hurt the farmer when organized, but through his strength he can prevent them from working injury to others.

It has been shown already what an influence the farmer could have on the railroads by simply putting himself in a position where he could refuse to ship unless the prices and freights were satisfactory to him. The railroads can not exist unless they have

stuff to haul and plenty of it. They are dependent, directly or indirectly, on the farmer, and they can easily be made to feel their dependence. This question of transportation is a very large and important one, in that it involves the future development and settling up of the country. Indeed, the whole history of the march of men across this continent is a history of transportation. It has been said by some supposedly wise men that our people have moved westward along parallels of latitude. But it is not so. They moved along the watercourses, first down-stream, and then up-stream. Always the effort was to make transportation as easy as possible. And the railroads have contributed powerfully to the making of the country. We must give them full credit. Still when it comes to carrying the farmer's produce east they have not always been reasonable in their charge.

And it seems to be probable that they are going to be more unreasonable as time goes on. While there was fierce competition competing points at least got the benefit of low rates, though non-competing points suffered severely. The railroads taxed the latter to make up for the low rates of necessity granted to the former. Certain sections have been discriminated against; all rates have often been too high, and some rates have always been too high. But it has been suggested that the situation may get worse for the farmer. If the tendency toward railroad consolidation goes on we may see an end to competition. It is certain that the purpose of combination is to check

and control competition. If it succeeds the farmer will be forced to look out for his own interests. He should be in a position to say that he will not ship at all unless he can be sure of a fair net price on the farm for the products of his own toil.

The farmer is often told that the railroads are his friends. He himself need not be an enemy to the railroads in order to realize that there are no friendships in the business world. That world is a world of struggle and conquest. In that struggle the strongest win. Under present conditions the railroads will be as fair to the farmer as it pays them to be. Under the conditions which it is proposed to create they will be as fair as the farmer can compel them to be. Other men use the power that they possess, often in illegal and criminal ways, to coerce the railroads into favoring them. It is not intended that the farmers shall do anything illegal or criminal, but it is meant that they should realize that these unfair concessions are paid for by less powerful and favorable shippers, the farmers among them. So it is important that these latter should stand up for their own rights. If all shippers were treated equally there is reason to believe that freight rates could be reduced considerably, to the great benefit of the whole country.

Further, in the vast reorganization schemes of which we have heard so much, some of the railroads have been over-capitalized just as other industries have. And the farmer has to pay enough to enable

these roads to pay interest and make dividends on their vast issues of bonds and stocks that don't represent real value. He may well question the fairness of this arrangement. At any rate, the American Society of Equity will give some attention to this vital question of transportation. The individual farmer can not fight the railroads, but he can make a good showing as a member of a great and powerful organization numbering a million or more, made up of farmers all over the country determined to get their rights. Mr. John D. Rockfeller, who knows something of the virtues of combination, and who has recently been engaged in an effort to secure control of large systems of railroads, says:

"To fight the battle alone is to be lost. Association with others is an absolute necessity if we would be successful. In union there is strength and success. We can see this illustration every day in the business world."

Mr. Rockefeller is right. Especially is organization necessary for the farmers who are at the present moment unorganized themselves, fighting organizations in practically every branch of industry. Mr. Rockefeller's reference to the "business world" does not at present include the farmers. Everybody knows that they are not considered business people. But is it not time for them to get into the business world? What is good for one class of people who produce, manufacture and sell, is good for others. If "in union there is strength and success" for Rockefeller

and his associates, why would it not mean strength and success for the farmers? A good many years ago the Chinese were oppressed and harried by the civilized nations of the world very much as they are to-day. The people of China could make no headway against the trained soldiers of Europe. Finally a formidable rebellion broke out in the empire, and the authorities secured the services of that great Christian soldier, Charles George Gordon, who organized his Ever Victorious Army, and with it suppressed the rebellion without losing a single battle. No better army followed a gallant leader to victory. And to-day, if there were another Gordon at the head of a Chinese army, he might sweep Russia out of Manchuria and compel all the powers of the world to respect the integrity and the sovereignty of that ancient empire. Yet precisely the thing that the Chinese lacked was the power of organization and cooperation. But when they did act together it was with decisive results.

It can be so with the American farmers. They, too, have been oppressed and harried by highly organized bands of marauders, and they have been unable to protect themselves simply because they have not acted together. What we want to see is an Ever Victorious Army of American farmers, which shall fight, not for conquest, but in righteous defense of their rights, their families and themselves. Their victory, which will be sure, will redound to their own

honor and prosperity and to the welfare of the whole country. We want a new declaration of independence and a new independence day. God grant that it will come speedily.

CHAPTER XIV

Thus the syndicates and bankers
  Always crying out for bonds,
With both feet on the neck of labor,
  While they're clipping their coupons.
With their palace cars and banquets
  They can pass their time away,
And you old honest farmers
  Will have their banquet bill to pay.

There are many corporations
  That's no better now than knaves;
For they pay starvation wages
  And make men and women slaves;
And they work the little children
  In their sweat-shops day by day,
And to fill the rich man's coffers
  They must wear their life away.

In the daily papers a year ago was this interesting item:

"An increase of $4,500,000 in the capital stock of Deere & Co. was announced here to-day. The present capital of the concern is $1,500,000, and the stockholders have voted to increase this to $6,000,000. The additional capital is to provide for the remarkable growth and expansion of the business during the past few years and the further increase that is assured. It has all been subscribed by the present owners."

Of course this meant that the farmers will have to pay the dividends on this quadrupled stock in the price of agricultural implements made by this firm. And this brings to the front another one of the objects of the American Society of Equity, which is to enable the farmer to buy advantageously. It is a fact that the farmers frequently pay much more for their farm supplies than is necessary to insure a fair profit to the manufacturer and the merchant. As I write a letter comes from a member in Oklahoma. He says: "I am paying 2 per cent. per month for money to meet current expenses so I can hold my wheat for $1." Must such sacrifice and determination go unrewarded? Would any banker dare charge a farmer 24 per cent. a year if they were thoroughly organized? Besides, the margin of profit placed on goods sold to the farmers is often much greater than that added to goods sold to the people of the towns and cities. The reason is clear. In trading, the farmer is not an independent person. He does business as the merchant or manufacturer dictates. He is usually a debtor to the implement dealer and the storekeeper, whereas if he had cash to pay for his supplies he could buy more cheaply in any market in the country. Wherever the farmer turns to make his purchases he finds himself face to face with a trust or union. He is worsted in the encounter and loses some of the legitimate results of his work when he puts his unorganized skill and labor against the organized efforts of the union la-

borer. He loses again in the encounter with the organized miners who mine the steel—or, rather, the iron from which the steel is made—which enters into his implements. He loses when he meets the woodworkers, the wagonmakers, the furniture makers, the implement makers, the horseshoers, the threshermen, the milk handlers, the carpenters, the masons who build his buildings, the armies who manufacture the household articles, the clothing, the army of leather workers, and behind them the army of tanners, the armies which run the railroads, and the armies which run the trains over the roads to haul to market the products of the farmer. The farmer does not drive a nail, use a pin, lift a hoe or spade, coil a rope, or turn a furrow but he pays tribute to some one of the numerous armies arrayed against him. Day and night, night and day, he is being taxed for the support of these armies, all because he is meeting them single-handed, can not resist their encroachments, nor pass the tax along. Plainly he needs help to enable him to buy advantageously, which will be, largely again, in the interest of the consumer.

And this it is hoped to give him. Considering the great number of farmers who will be members of the American Society of Equity, and the fact that they will soon have a good cash balance as the result of selling at profitable prices, there can be no doubt that they will be able to purchase for cash and at the lowest prevailing prices. Even if the farmer buys his supplies with his own produce, his ability to put

a price on it will enable him to turn it in at higher figure than is now possible. He will no longer be under the necessity of asking for long credit, and whatever credit he may need he will get on the same favorable terms that other business men receive. Mention has already been made of the combination among the threshing men, which enables them to charge seven cents a bushel for threshing. If a farmer were able to say to the thresher that he would pay five or four cents, and that no farmer in the United States would pay a cent more, and if this was an equitable price, he would get his threshing done for four or five cents. This is the position in which the American Society of Equity would place every farmer in the country with reference to buying. Probably as much money is lost to the farmer by exorbitant prices which he has to pay as by the inadequate prices which he is compelled to take. He loses in both directions. It is time to stop the loss. The farmers can do it if they will, for they have the power, and their interest demands that they should use it. If they apply it properly, that is, through organization, the result can not be doubtful.

In seeking to buy at fair prices the farmer, through the American Society of Equity, will help all the people. Economically the struggle of man is for cheapness. Men in trying to satisfy their wants always endeavor to do so as cheaply as possible. The call for cheapness by the farmer has, in the past, been of necessity, and this necessity has been of

such a degree that they not only got cheapness but nastiness—low grade. Witness the volume of trade to some catalogue houses, where the chief recommendation was cheapness. The success of the American Society of Equity will benefit the home dealer who will keep a high grade of goods and sell at equitable prices. We look for a turning from the cheap, low grades, to high grade goods at equitable prices.

We have seen how the price of farm products has been influenced by this tendency, and also how manufacturers combine to resist the tendency. Every new invention, every new process, every application of a newly discovered force, and every improved application of a well-known force, contribute to bring about cheapness. The old force of competition works toward the end. But recently we have had a great advance of prices with no effective effort to resist the advance.

The farmers propose to take the field in a campaign for lower prices on the things they buy where lower prices should prevail, and they are going to use a force the operation of which will be irresistible. It is not so much a high price or a low price, but an equitable price all around that is demanded. The entrance of the Third Power through the American Society of Equity into the economic problems of the world marks an epoch in the history of the race. Although the last of the great powers to be organized, it is yet the fundamental or first power

or force which will dominate all others. The development of this society and the power it will represent and wield may be compared with the development of the force, electricity, which has revolutionized the industrial world. The awakening of the agricultural classes, the organization of them into a great national and international cooperative body, which is now being accomplished, will make possible the control by them of practically all the material that enters into the manufacturing and commerce of the world, and on which human and animal life depend. Such a revolution might appall us were it not for the fact that in working out this stupendous movement everything will be in the direction of improvement and better conditions for everybody and for every legitimate enterprise.

It will be so in the matter of prices. There will not be one price for the farmer and another for the working man and professional man. Whatever conquests the farmers win in this direction will be for the benefit of all. What the farmer gets, all will get. In fighting his own battle the farmer will fight the battle of every American citizen. It will be impossible to charge the farmer a fair price and to charge other classes an unfair price. So the American Society of Equity does not come to oppress or enslave any class, but to give liberty and independence to the greatest class of citizens, and through that to all others—not to destroy or cripple any institution, but to benefit and strengthen all institutions, including the

government itself. Heretofore farmers thought when organizing they must fight every institution on earth to get their right. This we admit is human nature, but also is a relic of barbarism. There are too many such relics remaining. The farmers really have *no fight* against anybody or anything; all they need is equity, and this they can take, regardless of the disposition of other parties.

Many schemes have been devised, and many more suggested, for the regulation and control of trusts. The law does something, and more stringent legal enactments might do more. But no curb can be as effectual as an organization of American citizens greater and stronger than the trusts themselves. Through this and through this alone can trust extortion be prevented, and fair treatment be secured for all. The people can do it for them. And the trust magnates understand this. With the help of shrewd and unscrupulous attorneys they can usually find a way to evade the most formidable statute, and to organize so as to get within the letter of the law. But they could make little headway with the people organized against them, and when the farmers are organized the people will be organized. How could the cotton or woolen manufacturers get along without the farmer's cotton or wool, or the packers without his cattle? This but indicates the power which the farmer could exert as a member of the American Society of Equity. He could oppose his trust—if you choose to call it so—to the manufacturing trusts,

and in such a contest the farmer must, of necessity, win. This is a force—this new force, this Third Power—which the industrial trusts would understand and respect. Thus organized, the farmers could meet their enemies and oppressors on their own ground, and overthrow them, if necessary, for the common good. The trust problem would be solved, and solved in such a way as to benefit all. And the farmer, enabled both to buy and sell advantageously, would enjoy a prosperity and freedom such as he has never known, and that prosperity and freedom would be shared by all our people. The world has been waiting long for this Third Power. Now it is at hand.

CHAPTER XV

If farmers were only half as persistent
As politicians are wholly inconsistent,
What a different footstool!
They walk up to the secret voting booths,
The aged and younger and hopeful youths,
And vote for men that others may choose
Over them to rule.

The farmer produces the wealth of the land;
In framing the laws he should take a hand—
Insist upon his rights.
He feeds the whole world by sweat and toil,
Forces great crops from the resisting soil,
From famine a safe and shielding foil,
And no wrong incites.

Something has been said of the influence that the farmer can exert through organization on the politics of the country. One of the purposes of the American Society of Equity is to enable him to exert such influence. Here, again, it is not because the farmers, organized, need to look to politics for relief or strength on their account, but for the general welfare of humanity. The farmers, through their society, not only intend to do equity, but to get equity; not only to give equity, but to demand equity. It is not the object of the society to become

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a political party. But it is intended to secure, through already existing parties, laws in the interest of agriculture. Though legislation is not the first thing sought, nor the most important thing, legislation is nevertheless needed. The reason that it has not been secured is that the politicians, though prolific in promises, when seeking election, forget all about the farmers when they get to Washington. They quickly fall under other influences. Moreover, they know that the farmers are easily put off; that they do not persist in the pursuit of their aims, and that when election day comes round again they may be trusted to support the party, readily accepting excuses and trusting to new promises. Nor are the farmers adequately represented in Congress by men of their own class. Thus they are largely without influence in shaping legislation. Until they are in a position, through cooperation, to secure what they want, progress will be slow. With the American Society of Equity a success, all these things can be rapidly accomplished.

It is not necessary to set out here all that the country needs in the way of legislation. But some things may be mentioned. Possibly the first and most important thing is some lightening of the burden of taxation; and this also implies less extravagance with the people's money, less graft, rake-offs and boodle, or, in short, the money wisely and economically expended, when we will see greater results with less tax. The farmer is taxed on everything

he buys and yet is protected on scarcely anything he sells. This is an evil that must be righted, and it can be righted, but only by the combined efforts of the farmers. Until there are such efforts nothing will be done. As long as there are a few people who can control the taxing power of the government, and many people who are content to have that power so used, it is idle to hope for relief. The few will control as long as the many allow them to control—and not one moment longer. Even the slightest measure of relief is denied at the present time. Opportunities have long been presented for making reciprocal commercial treaties with foreign nations that would have had the effect of making a much larger market for farm products, but they have invariably been put aside at the dictation of selfish interests demanding protection. Treaty after treaty of this sort has been killed or allowed to die in the Senate, which has been indifferent to the welfare of the farmer if only the protected industries were allowed to have a monopoly of the home market. Rather than remove or lower the duty on one article manufactured in New England, our Congress has preferred to allow the farmer to get along as best he could—to find his own market. Yet when protection hurts a certain corporation, Congress is quick to grant a rebate of the tax on any product that goes into a manufactured article when that article is exported. But nothing is done for the farmer.

Yet there are many millions of foreigners who

could be taught to consume the fine cereals and meats produced on our American farms, if an earnest and well-directed effort were made to open and cultivate foreign markets. Lower taxes and wider markets could thus both be secured by legislation, and the American Society of Equity will work for such legislation, bringing directly to bear on Congress the influence of over 10,000,000 American voters who now play little part in the business of lawmaking. This constant failure of the efforts to secure reciprocity has another bad effect on the farmer, for it provokes retaliation on the part of other countries from which the farmer even now suffers, and will suffer still more. Our fruits, cattle and meat products have been made the subjects of discriminating taxes and vexatious inspection imposed and resorted to by foreign governments in retaliation for exorbitant duties levied by our government on their exports to this country. There are threats of further retaliation, and we even hear talk of a European combination to save the European markets from the so-called American invasion. Yet we go on in the same old way, and our manufacturers get even for the low prices at which they must sell abroad, by charging the home consumer greatly higher prices. Thus the farmers are kept out of foreign markets that they ought to have, simply that the manufacturers may plunder the home market.

Such arrangements as these are plainly not the

work of the farmers or of the friends of the farmer. They were devised by men who understood perfectly that the agricultural class is docile, patient, and most easily fleeced. The farmer is not interested in paying taxes for the benefit of people who never seek to benefit him, in narrowing the market for farm products, or in provoking retaliation from foreign governments. What he wants is freedom, equity, fair play to all, markets as wide as the world, low taxes—and not one of these things is his at the present time. With all these, and with the American Society of Equity at work in his behalf, he probably would need little else from the government. But whatever he needed, he would get. For the politicians, who now so quickly forget the farmer, would realize that it was dangerous to do so, if they found that they were dealing with a great organization acting as a unit—an organization that refused to accept promises as legal tender, but that insisted on a redemption of those promises in honesty and good faith. Thus may the farmers make their influence felt in the condition of affairs which is rightfully theirs. The Third Power can easily defeat the first, second or third house. The farmers will be ignored as long as it is safe to ignore them, and no longer. The thing to do is to make it unsafe. The American Society of Equity is the means to bring that result to pass.

CHAPTER XVI

Of all the modern ideas,
In the North, South, East or West,
The justice bringing idea
Of Equity is best.
It can harm no human calling,
And can boast none o'er the rest;
But brings equal chance to all of them,
And therefore it's the best.

Manifestly it will be impossible for the farmers to cooperate unless they are kept thoroughly informed of what is going on in every part of the country, and indeed of the world. It would be foolish, to take a simple case, to attempt to fix and maintain a price on farm products unless each member knew what that price was. This information, at least, must be regularly furnished. It will be conveyed to the various members of the society through their official paper, which is a part of the plan. This official organ will be printed four times a month as soon as the society is sufficiently organized, and there can be little doubt that with this plan in operation the recommended price will be printed by all the other daily and weekly papers as regularly as the markets are reported now. The recommended price will have to be printed by all newspapers hav-

ing a market department, for it will also be the market price.

With this knowledge, concert of action will be easy. For every member of the society will have the same price and the same advice about the same crop at the same time, and, feeling sure that purchasers can not get those products from any one else for less than they can get them from him, he will be under no temptation to sell for less himself. Without this knowledge it would be wholly impossible to make the scheme work. But further than this, it is felt that the members of the society should have information that would convince them that prices agreed on are fair and reasonable—and attainable. So it is proposed, through the local unions or members, to carry on a system of crop reporting that will surpass anything ever before accomplished, or even attempted. Every member will be a crop reporter. The present system, or lack of system, of reporting crops is the source of great loss to the farmers. Take wheat, for instance: The harvest begins in Texas in May and ends in the Dakotas about September. Yet, as a matter of fact, crops are maturing and harvests are in progress in some part of the world every day in the year. From the beginning to the end of the harvest in this country, and more or less every day in the year, false crop reports are circulated, the yields are exaggerated, damage from weather, insects, etc., is emphasized, and all manner of frauds and deceptions are prac-

tised. The result is that the market fluctuates every day, and often several times a day, until the poor bewildered farmer sells rather than holds against uncertainties. The government reports, from the very conditions under which they are obtained, can not be more than reasonably good guesses, and consequently they are not held in good repute. So much discredit has sometimes been placed upon them that the market has been known to have acted in exactly the opposite way from that in which the reports should have influenced it.

So, the American Society of Equity will see to it that the farmers have full and accurate reports of conditions and crops. The size of the yield, and the character of the product; the nature of the season, whether favorable or unfavorable—all this will the members of the society get. Each member will be in a position to report the exact condition of growing crops on his own farm, and also yields and quantities on hand. He can also give a correct report of his neighbor's crop, if that neighbor does not belong to the society. These reports will be given to the secretary at each meeting, to be forwarded, or will be sent to headquarters, direct by members, where they will be tabulated by statisticians, and in this way more accurate results will be secured than could be obtained in any other way. The crop reports and market conditions will be sent to each member, and thus all will be able to cooperate in asking and obtaining uniform prices. This is not only one of the

strongest features of the proposed plan—it is an absolutely essential feature. With such trustworthy information, prices can be adjusted in such a way as to be equitable to both producer and consumer. Without this information such adjustment would be impossible.

But other information of an educational sort will be furnished by the American Society of Equity. Reference has already been made to the work of agricultural schools and colleges, but valuable as this work is, it does not meet the requirements. The time has arrived when more intensive farming must be practised, and conditions will soon be such that our farms must produce two or three times as much as they do now, if they are to supply the ever-increasing demands of the world. It is a fact that the average of our staple crops can be raised to three times the present average. This has been done in European countries, and what is done there can be duplicated here. Intensive farming implies more intelligent farming. To farm more intelligently, the people must be educated in the mysteries of the science. To educate them schools must be established and maintained. There are, at present, many agricultural schools and colleges, but they are not sufficient for the almost universal education of the young people from the farms which will be required when the American Society of Equity is in successful operation. Nor do they fully meet the requirements of the advanced agriculture that must be practised in

the near future. The schools and other institutions which it is proposed to establish should be the meeting-place of farmers within the neighborhood, and they should be looked to for enlightenment on the intricate matters related to seed, soil, fertilizers and cultivation. Each farm should be plotted; there should be a chart giving the analysis of the soil in each field, or parts of fields; and recommendations should be made regarding the plant food needed to produce 40 bushels of wheat, 80 bushels of oats, 100 bushels of corn and 250 bushels of potatoes, etc., to the acre. Such an institution could be of vast help in giving instruction concerning drainage, irrigation, breeding, stock, grain, fruits, vegetables; it could help in stamping out disease, fighting insects and blight, analyzing seeds for impurities, and guarding against and eradicating weeds. It could, and would, award prizes and medals for the best stock, the most successful crops, and in many ways it would guard and promote farmers' interests in the highest degree. The education which the sons and daughters of the farmer would get at these schools, at a merely nominal expense, would be of the greatest value, in that it would greatly increase their efficiency, and what is even more important, would give them a pride in and make them content with their lot in life. A membership of 5,000 for each such institution, and annual dues of $5, would afford a revenue of $25,000, from which enormous benefits would flow. And as agriculture is the foun-

dation of our national prosperity, we should strive to promote the most intelligent conditions on the farms to the end that our material prosperity may be large and perpetual.

Yet the qualification that has already been made must not be forgotten. All this education, as far as it involves the raising of larger crops, and an increase in productiveness of the land, would be calamitous unless the farmer also had the power to fix the price of his products. But with this power assured, and the American Society of Equity will assure it, the more education and the larger production there are, the better will it be for all. The two things hang together. The farmer must control the present supply before he devotes himself to the work of increasing it. And the greater his success in increasing it, the greater is the necessity that he should have the situation wholly within his own control.

CHAPTER XVII

The cause of Equity is good;
It seeks not its own gain,
Against the weak ones of the earth,
Who toil 'mid want and pain;
It welcomes all within its band,
The strong as well as weak;
Its motto is, "Cooperate,"
Each other's good to seek.

The cause of Equity is just;
It lends a helping hand
In lifting up a mighty force—
The third power in our land.
That is the struggle it may win
Against foes unafraid,
Who wish to cause its overthrow,
It needs each farmer's aid.

All this means, what cooperation must ever mean, unity and solidarity among the people cooperating. The farmers, instead of being strangers to one another and rivals and competitors of one another, will be friends and fellow helpers. This will be a great gain, and in many ways. Every person will be the better for knowing that he is a member of a great society the object of which is the good of all. He will know that while he is working for others, others are working for him, and that out of the combined effort good must come to the whole agricul-

tural class, and indeed to all other classes. There will be such an incentive to work and sacrifice as the American farmer has never known. The very sense of unity will be a great stimulus. Other men have found it so. They all have their organizations—manufacturers, working men, lawyers and physicians, etc., and these minister to their pride in their calling, and help to make that calling honorable and profitable. The farmers should learn from the experience of other workers unity, combination, cooperation, mutual helpfulness, each for all and all for each, instead of the fierce guerrilla warfare of competition—these are along the lines of present-day tendencies, and are the products of what we may truthfully call natural forces.

And it all strengthens the influences which make for self-help. There are many things that the farmers can do in combination that they never can do under the present individualistic system. It would be difficult to show, for instance, why farmers should not carry their own insurance. It has been abundantly demonstrated that fire risks on farm properties exclusively can be written at only a small fraction of what the old companies now charge. The hazard is slight, and of course it would be slighter still if each farmer were interested as a stockholder in the company which would have to pay for losses. Already there are farmers' insurance companies operating in various parts of the country, to the great satisfaction of their members. But whether it be

through local companies or through one central company, the farmers certainly ought to carry their own fire insurance. It is the same with life insurance. This insurance, if limited to the agricultural class, can easily be offered at a lower rate than that charged by companies that take all classes of risks up to the extra-hazardous. And with improved conditions on the farm, which it is intended to secure, life will be prolonged, and the farmer will become an even more desirable risk than he is now. This is incidental, and is not involved in the main plan, but it is important as being one of many things which the farmers may, and should, do for themselves. They even might, as has been suggested, in time, become their own bankers.

Viewed in this way the field of the American Society of Equity is almost limitless. It is remarkable how everything that is suggested contributes to solidarity. For example, the society will exert its influence to secure the improvement of the highways, toward which something has already been done. The amount of money that the farmers lose each year by bad and impassable roads is almost incalculable. The light loads which they are often compelled to haul, the wear on wagons and stock, the often enforced loss of a favorable opportunity to sell through the inability to get to town at all—all this is costly and wasteful. We all realize what the railroads have done for the farmer in the way of opening up markets, and we know that if the rail-

roads were allowed to get out of repair they would be of much less service. Insufficient or worn-out rolling stock, broken-down locomotives, unsafe tracks, weakened bridges, poor terminal facilities or none at all, would cost the farmer millions of dollars. It is precisely so in the case of wagon roads. When these are good and easy to be traveled every day in the year, there is just so much added to the value of the farm. When they are impassable, the value of the farm is lessened by just that much.

But this is not the whole story, one of the terrors of the farm is isolation and loneliness. Against these the American Society of Equity proposes to wage war by improving or compelling the improvement of the highways, in order that, among other things, there may be an increased social intercourse among the farmers. Good roads and human relationships alike tend to bind men together. Present conditions, on many American farms, have been beautifully and truthfully described by Meredith Nicholson in his poem, "Watching the World Go By":

Swift as a meteor and as quickly gone
A train of cars darts swiftly through the night;
Scorning the wood and field it hurries on,
A thing of wrathful might.

There, from the farmer's home a woman's eyes,
Roused by the sudden jar and passing flare,
Follow the speeding phantom till it dies,—
An echo on the air.

Narrow the life that always has been hers,
The evening brings a longing to her breast;
Deep in her heart some aspiration stirs,
And mocks her soul's unrest.

Her tasks are mean and endless as the days,
And sometimes love can not repay all things;
An instrument that rudely touched obeys,
Becomes discordant strings.

The train that followed in the headlight's glare,
Bound for the city and a larger world,
Made emphasis on her poor life of care,
As from her sight it whirled.

Thus from all lonely hearts the great earth rolls,
Indifferent though one woman grieve and die,
Along its iron track are many souls
That watch the world go by.

Is it not so? There is a spiritual side to this question of life on the farm that we can not safely ignore. And the man who is not deeply interested in making farm life all that it should be, and can be, is not fit to be an American citizen. We may not be able to bring the farm to the world, but we can take something of the world, its life, its virtues, its beauty and its intellectual stimulus to the farm. Something of this has been done already, as has been shown, but more remains to be done. We can not cure human discontent and dissatisfaction, but we can, and must, as far as possible, destroy those conditions which give discontent and dissatisfaction a reason for being.

CHAPTER XVIII

The time has surely now come to pass
When farmers should arise in solid mass
And throttle wrong.
They are the ordained rulers of the earth,
So intended from the day of creation's birth.
Without their help what'd our land be worth?
Arise, be strong!

General irrigation of the farms, the prevention of food adulteration, the settling of disputes without recourse to the courts, and the organization in other surplus-producing countries of societies similar to the American Society of Equity, are all within the scope of this movement; and they all have a direct bearing on the problem to be solved. With a constantly fertile and productive soil, freed from the wrongful competition of base and fraudulent products, relieved from the vexations and delays of litigation, and bound together with his fellows all over the world in a society seeking the good of all, the American farmer will be his own master, and will enjoy a peace, prosperity and dignity such as he never before knew.

Such will be the general result. Particularly, the farmer will find that the value of his land will increase from 25 to 100 per cent. Producing more

value, the farms will, of course, be worth more. It has been said that the capital invested in farming amounts to twenty billions of dollars, most of which is, of course, in land. This could easily be doubled, by making the farms more productive of money. Reference has been made to the action of a certain corporation in quadrupling its stock. This is common in the commercial world. Is it not in order for the farmers to declare their farms and plants worth four times the old value? It is quite the style for manufacturers of agricultural implements to quadruple their fortunes by the simple act of making a declaration to that effect, and then to put the price of their goods on a basis that will enable them to pay dividends on the increased capitalization. If the farmers must pay prices for their plows, cultivators and other machinery that makes such things possible for the manufacturers, why not put up the price of grain and farm produce so that the earning capacity of farms will be increased to such an extent that farmers also may declare their capital stock to be four times as great as it was?

But this would not be a case of simple "marking up," for the real value of the farms would be increased. With fair prices, close and intelligent cultivation, equitable laws for all, wide foreign markets, reciprocity, good roads, irrigation, information as to actual crop and market conditions, ability to direct produce to the best markets, systematic marketing

and organization, farm lands would rise in value greatly, and every farmer and the whole country would be the richer. On such a firmly established basis as this our national prosperity could hardly be shaken. As has been pointed out, the farmer could and would spend more money for improvements, more for education, and more for both necessities and luxuries. Indeed, things that are now luxuries would speedly become necessities. The certainty of the business, as contrasted with the present uncertainty, would put a new life and spirit into the farmers. They would be proud of their occupation, and happy and contented in it. Travel, books, pictures, better clothes, better house furnishings, more amusements, and a wider and fuller life, would all be in reach of the farmers. There would be no need of pinching economy in the good years to insure against distress in the bad years. Having a certain profit from their products, they would spend it freely, and every industry in the country would be benefited—even beyond the dreams of the past—thus benefiting every man, woman and child. The improvements that the farmer would feel that it was worth while to make would still further increase the value of the farms, and thus in every possible material way the improvement would be tremendous. The men on the farms would not have to work as hard as they do now, and they could shorten their working day, thus gaining time for other things. With a larger margin of profit, they would not be driven to raise

the largest possible crops in order to make a bare living. There would be less drudgery and more rational enjoyment, and thus rural life would take a charm which it so sadly lacks under present conditions. There would be more money, fewer notes in bank, possibly no mortgages, and with it a general ease and security which present uncertainty and anxiety make quite impossible. The farmer is the last man who should feel any anxiety, and yet anxiety seems to be almost his special foe. It grows out of the uncertainty that he feels in regard to his income from year to year, the inevitable result of uncertainty of weather, yields and prices and his sense of helplessness. It is from these things that he is asked to emancipate himself. Think for a moment of the effect that freedom of this sort has on the minds of men. They at once begin to feel that many things are worth while which never seemed to be so before. Even life itself becomes more worth while. This freedom would encourage the farmer to improve his property, to make his home more pleasant and attractive, would increase his pride in his occupation, keep his interest up to the mark and his mind on the alert, and would make his life the joy that it ought to be. To sum up: The effect of the American Society of Equity will be to benefit the farmers of the United States and of the world and all other businesses as well, for they are all dependent on the farm. It will mean higher education, better citizenship, less poverty, misery and crime, lower taxes,

fewer saloons, more schools and more innocent places of amusement. Present uncertainties as to price will be removed, farm values will increase, thus adding billions of dollars to the wealth of the country. Business everywhere will be stimulated, and there will be a more equal distribution of wealth, a much larger proportion of it remaining in the country. Speculation in the products of the farm will be done away with, and all its evil effects on those products and on the people who watch the board and ticker will vanish. The success of the American Society of Equity will make it possible for the farmers whose tastes run in that direction to have comfortable and even luxurious homes, and will make of the country a veritable paradise. And prosperity will be general and permanent because based on the prosperity of that industry on which all other industries depend. An ambitious program surely, but it can be carried out if the farmers will but loyally and intelligently cooperate. This is no dream—or, if it is, it is one that can be easily realized. The farmers of the United States can make it come true. The future of the United States of America is the future of agriculture; mark this prediction. So the appeal is to the patriotic as well as to the selfish motives of the farmers. Through their salvation the salvation of the country must be worked out.

CHAPTER XIX

Cooperate! Cooperate!
If you would keep the boys
Contented with the farmer's lot,
A sharer of his joys.
Lift them above the path that you
Of old were wont to walk,
A humdrum round of drudgery,
Where wolves of want close stalk.

Cooperate! Cooperate!
The good wife needs a rest,
For she has shared your burdens long,
Your true friend and your best.
Through countless tasks and thankless toil
Her youth was gladly spent,
But now the load too heavy lies
Upon her shoulders bent.

There are many problems that are troubling our wise men a good deal that will be solved by the successful operation of this plan. A few of them may well claim our attention. We have all read the mournful lamentation over the unwillingness of young men to remain on the farms. The tendency of population is, we are told, constantly toward the cities. And the tendency is growing stronger all the while. The percentage of the city to the total population is larger than it was ten years ago, it being

41 per cent. in 1890, and 47 per cent., counting in towns of 1,000 population and over, in 1900. The growth of cities in the United States is one of the most marked features in our American life. That the cities will continue to grow may be taken for granted, but there is no reason why they should grow so largely at the expense of the country and country towns.

A writer, discussing this question a short time ago, said that the reason the sons of farmers sought the cities was that city life was so much more complex than life on the farm, and that the whole tendency of our civilization was toward complexity. This may be the philosophy of it, and it is undoubtedly true that our people demand excitement and variety. Dullness and monotony are to most of us intolerable. So there is a shrinking from the uneventful farm life, and also a longing for the more stirring life of the large city. But this is not the whole of the question. What the American youth, whether he be country or city bred, wants above everything else is a career—an opportunity. The city offers a thousand chances to one offered by the farm. The chance of failure is greater in the city than on the farm, when a mere living is considered, but so is the chance of success. And Americans were ever drawn by risk. They will play for high stakes, and they do not as a rule grumble if they lose, provided they have had a fair chance to win.

So the young man wants his career. He considers

the case of his father, perhaps, and sees that he has worked drudgingly all his life for the most contemptible reward. Long hours, severe and heart-breaking toil, anxiety, pinching economy, self-denial and sacrifice, and finally old age, with, it may be, little to show for it all—what is there in the picture that is alluring to the high-spirited young man? The young man loves his home, and if he loves it he remembers it with affection, but still he knows that the life was narrow, that the hardships were many, and that the return was slight. Apparently there is nothing more in the life for him than there was for his father, and so he escapes to the city, where there is at least a chance for him to win his spurs. People may have theories and write learnedly on this subject, but there is no way of keeping the young man on the farm if we allow things to remain as they are. Our wise, good and honest men may deplore the tendency toward the city, but they can not honestly quarrel with the young man's choice. Nor can they forbid him to make his choice.

There is only one thing to be done, and that is to make farm life more attractive, and equip it with good possibilities. We can not exclude men from the cities or chain them to the farms, but we can allure, attract and keep them to the farms. And this is what we propose to do through the American Society of Equity. If the farmer's son could feel sure that he would get good prices for his products, that he would be able to control his own business, that he

would not, as now, be neglected by the government, be ridiculed by his acquaintances, and that all the capacity he possesses and all the education he might acquire would find abundant scope for exercise on the farm with the certainty of liberal reward, he would think long before migrating to the city. Give the farmer as many of the comforts of the city as he cares to possess, a fair chance at the city's amusements, plenty of books and papers and an education that would fit him to enjoy them, and he will, with a sure chance for a career, be quite content to remain a tiller of the soil. But if he is to be a mere drudge, a hewer of wood and drawer of water for others, we have no right to be surprised that agriculture has slight charm for the young man.

It is admitted that it is a bad thing both for the city and the country to have the young men in such large numbers leave the latter for the former. The professions are crowded; there are more clerks and bookkeepers than are needed, and the farm needs laborers more now than ever before, and it is besides dangerous when there is a large element of the population living in boarding-houses without any of the restraints and safeguards of home. This congestion of population is getting worse. And with it the chance for the individual is growing slighter all the time. Yet all the while there is a clamor for workers on the farms. Would the average young man run away from a good chance on the farm to a desperate struggle in the city with thousands of others perhaps

better equipped for it than he is? This is not likely. The farms need the young men, and it is to the interest of the nation that they should stay on the farm. There would be more than enough work for all if the conditions were right and if the workers could only be assured that it would pay to farm to the limit. With larger profits the farmer could afford to pay better wages and to grant a shorter working day to the men employed by him, and so those toilers who are now stranded in the city would be drawn to the farm, to the great advantage both of agriculture and themselves.

The possibilities in this direction are very great, and they should be attractive. Nothing is more needed in this country than a redistribution of the population wisely and judiciously made. To secure this we must make farming as attractive as it was meant to be by God when He created a garden and put a man in it to dress it. The poet Cowley writes: "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain," and Cowper assures us that "God made the country, and man made the town." True to his nature man has done what he could to spoil the country, God's handiwork. It can be, to some extent at least, restored to its lost estate. And it is fortunate that much is already being done to accomplish this. We have only to cooperate intelligently with forces already at work in order to keep the country from being depopulated and the city from being overcrowded. In some other countries rural life is popular.

It can be made so with us. Indeed, the popular taste is already turning in that direction. There is no business that demands more brains than agriculture if it is properly carried on. But in these days brains must be liberally paid. The competition for talent is severe, and the farm must be prepared to meet it. If there were assurance of adequate reward for farming even the present isolation and loneliness and other unsatisfactory conditions would not repel. Men go to the Klondike and live there simply that they may make their fortunes. They will brave anything for the sake of a chance to make their way in the world and to find free scope for the talent they feel stirring within them. The frozen north, the burning tropics, the islands of the sea, nay, the most barbarous and dangerous life—all these call to our young men, and they do not call in vain. Yet they turn their backs with something like contempt on the farm. Is it not strange? And does not the fact condemn us as a people? Surely we can do better than this. The American Society of Equity offers the chance. It would make farming attractive, and would again clothe it with the old seductiveness that it once had for our people in those days when every American citizen wanted to become a landowner. A shame it is that that charm has been lost. But it need not be lost permanently. Even as it is the life has a charm which the shriekers on the floor of the stock exchange and in the wheat pit know nothing of. For the farmer does produce something, and he

at least has the satisfaction of knowing that he is of some use in the world.

The problem, then, is to develop the life on the farm up to the full measure of its great possibilities. We must make farming a career in the sense that other honorable occupations are careers, assure the farmer of a fair return for his labor, develop in him a pride in his work, make him see that it is worth while for him to put into it all the brains he possesses and that scientific farming pays, and give him that intellectual stimulus which comes from a larger and freer life. We must elevate the farmer's business until it is on an equality with the best business in the country, and when farming as a profession is the best profession on earth. When we have done all this, when the Third Power at last asserts itself, there will be no difficulty in keeping the boys on the farm, and other boys will want to come. Is not the experiment worth trying? Do not the farmers see that they owe it to their profession, the most ancient and honorable of all professions, to exert themselves to the utmost to give it that standing in the eyes of the world that it ought to have and once did have? And can not all our people be made to understand that anything which contributes to the accomplishment of all these results is worthy of their cordial and enthusiastic support? There is nothing here suggested that may not be done. The question is, Will the farmers do it?

CHAPTER XX

Who, then, 's more entitled to inspire the laws,
Who'd take more interest in the common cause,
Than he with good at heart?
As barnacles on the great ship of state,
Politicians decrease its fast sailing rate
And have no cares for its final fate;
They know no chart.

It is, of course, quite impossible to consider this question apart from politics. Few questions in this country can be considered in this detached way. In this case it happens that there is a very direct and intimate connection between the reform proposed and politics—not party politics, but politics in the larger and more scientific sense. The air is full of talk about political reform. The abuses, injustices and oppressions incident to the business of government in this country are dwelt on with much emphasis. All know that corruption abounds on every hand, that graft is almost the law of our political life, that extravagance is the rule, that favoritism is prevalent, and that those with the strongest "pull" get the greatest consideration. There is discrimination everywhere, and it is in favor of the strong and against the weak. The law itself is too often the

mere agent of the rich and powerful for carrying out their doubtful schemes.

Why is all this true in a country in which the people are supposed to govern? None of us can be made to believe that the people are corrupt or that they deliberately prefer bad to good government. The people are not corrupt, and so far from preferring bad government it is they who chiefly suffer from it. The trouble is that the people do not govern. Nominally a democracy, this government is the oligarchy controlled by a comparatively small class in its own interest. The people simply take what is given to them. Thus we have turned our system upside down and are false to the fundamental law of our political being. When a scoundrel in the postoffice department is caught with money in his hands that does not belong there we all know that it is the people's money that he has stolen. When a rascally law is enacted taxing the people for the benefit of a few greedy and grasping individuals, it is not the people who are guilty of the oppression, for it is they that are oppressed. Divided into parties, the respectable and decent men of our cities are powerless to checkmate the rogues who prey on all alike, no matter what party they may belong to. The combination between men in office and corporations seeking franchises and favors is a combination in the interest of the politicians and the corporations and against the interest of the people. The people everywhere suffer, not because they govern, but because they are

governed, and really without their consent. Pulls, influence, money, party trickery, corporate corruption in politics practised by our leading citizens—these be our rulers. And to this perversion of our government from its true aim and purpose are due all the ills from which we suffer.

And it is only those who make something out of government who have any constant and effective influence in public affairs. President Hadley, of Yale University, writes:

"Except in those grave crises when a wave of patriotism sweeps over the community the support on which a democratic government relies is spasmodic and accidental. No man except the professional politician feels that the government is being run in his particular interest. On none, therefore, except the professional politician can it rely for continuous activity in giving effect to its decrees."

We all understand this perfectly well. Who are the men directly and keenly and continuously interested in politics if not those who work simply that they may get something out of the game? The men who speak in political campaigns are, as a rule, men who, if not paid outright for their services, expect to get appointments if their side wins. Year after year you see the same men hanging around the polls, and hoping, through their connection with the organization, to be "taken care of." Gradually the government has been wrested from the hands of the people, and more and more—and as a consequence—

the people have lost interest in it and influence with it.

Now the proposition is to restore to the people that supremacy which is rightfully theirs, and which they must have if this is ever again to be a government of the people. As this is even yet pre-eminently an agricultural country, the farmers are the people. With the millions of men directly interested in furthering their own interests, which are those of the people, and bound together in an organization, the usurpation of the politicians and corporations would be broken, and the real rulers would govern. Considered in this light the American Society of Equity —the Third Power—is an instrument for the restoration of true democratic government in the United States, regardless of name of party. No administration would dare to disregard such an influence, or would think of tying itself up to the politicians and those who now use them. Under such a system nothing would or could be done without the freely expressed will of the people. If they governed themselves badly, they would still govern themselves, and would be responsible for all mistakes and crimes. With this power and influence the people would regain their old interest in public affairs, and the government would no longer be forced to rely on the professional politician "for continuous activity in giving effect to its decrees." In a word, it is proposed to broaden the base of government and to put the power and responsibility in and on the peo-

ple. Favors enjoyed by all are not favors, but rights. A favor is something enjoyed by one at the expense of others. If we can secure the granting of justice to all and the withdrawal of privileges enjoyed only by the few, we shall destroy the "pull" and the whole system based on it. So this is a movement for democratic government—government for all and by all, in which all shall participate. With this secured most of the evils from which we are now suffering would disappear. The pull would not work when there is nothing to be gained by it. The people would not be interested in stealing from themselves. If there was nothing for corruption to win there would be no corruption. In brief, the remedy is to be sought in a simple adherence to what is the true American system, from which we have so widely departed, and in a loyal adherence to the old American ideals.

One other point is made by President Hadley that bears directly on this discussion. He calls attention to the fact that business and politics are now both regarded as games, and he says:

"A wider discretionary power for good or ill is placed in the hands of those by whom the public affairs of the city or state are conducted. These affairs will not be safe while politics is regarded as a game. * * * Under an imperialistic policy our government can not remain what it is. It must grow either worse or better. It can not remain a game in which the struggle for success is as far as possible disassociated from the moral sense of the

participants. It will involve either a direct breach of trust or a direct acceptance of trust."

How widely this "game" theory of politics is held we all know, or if we do not we can easily learn by a few minutes' talk with a ward worker. Perhaps we ourselves have held to the theory. However this may be, the theory is wholly pernicious. For what is a "game" except something at which some one must win and some other one lose? It is the risk of losing, the hazard, that gives the game all its charm. There would be no betting on horse races if it were positively certain that every one would win. If success were sure for all, our gambling laws would enforce themselves—for there would be no gambling. What, therefore, are we to think of a political system administered by, or in the name of, a free people, which is avowedly based on the theory that some of the people must win at the expense of others of the people? Yet that is the present situation. It should be ended. An honest government is one under which every citizen, even the humblest, would win—that is, it is not a game. It is a business, and a business conducted for the benefit of all. And that is the sort of government that is advocated by the American Society of Equity. Politicians do not struggle, and plot, and bribe in order that they may secure justice and equity; what they seek is privilege. They play the game, and they play it for rich stakes. So it is proposed to uproot this game theory, for, as President Hadley truthfully says, our "affairs will not be

safe while politics is regarded as a game." If we make it impossible, as we intend to do, for one man to win at the expense of another, we shall end the game business and destroy the interest in politics now shown by men who ought to be banished from politics. With the people in power, and with the government, which is now a great gambling affair, turned into an honorable business enterprise, corruption, bribery and extravagance will disappear, and elections, instead of being fierce and degrading struggles for spoil, will be, as they ought to be, sober consultations regarding questions of principle and policy in which all will have a legitimate interest.

CHAPTER XXI

While some may think him quite enchanting,
Heed not the politician's senseless ranting;
Down with his throne!
In your sturdy ranks are statesmen true
Who'd see that you received what's justly due.
Bring them forward, as you surely should do—
Have rulers of your own!

Much is said about the dangers of a strong government. But surely no one will deny that the government ought, at least, to be stronger than any citizen or combination of citizens. The power of all must be stronger than the power of less than all. Otherwise we shall have the rule of the many by the few, which is abhorrent to American ideas. So we shall have a government strong enough to prevent one man from injuring another. And it will make no difference how rich and powerful the would-be injurer is. In no other way than this can justice and equity be secured. The government must first itself be just, and then it must, standing above and outside of all classes and cliques, impose absolute justice upon all. We all know that weak governments can not do this. A feeble ruler is always, and of necessity must be, an unjust and oppressive ruler. In order

to maintain himself he is forced to seek the support of the rich and powerful or of certain classes of the rich and powerful, and to win their support he must favor them at the expense of the rest of the community. A study of the history of the South and Central American republics will show that this is true. To be just, a government must be great and strong, owing no favors to any one, and granting none to any one.

To this extent, then, we intend to have a strong government in this country. Putting the case in the other way, surely no one will say that it should be less strong than even the most powerful citizen, or combination of citizens. We want all the people—and not some of the people—to rule all the people. And this, and this only, is self-government. We may then start with the certainty that the success of the American Society of Equity and the triumph of the Third Power will mark the end of class rule and of the favoritism that has grown out of it. Thus we shall have justice and the destruction of all motives that lead men in power to be guilty of injustice. Surely that will be a great gain. Of course it would be foolish to attempt to say what such a government might do, for it could do whatever it pleased to do. What it pleased to do would depend wholly on the will of the people. It is conceivable that the new system might develop along socialistic lines, and that the central authority might interfere more than it does now with what we call private business. Yet

there is no tendency to the confiscation of property nor anything that will check enterprise, nor limit ambition or kill incentive to efforts. But if two classes of citizens got into a controversy causing inconvenience and loss to the whole community, it is very probable that all the people, acting through their government, would intervene to protect themselves and to end the quarrel. The Interstate Commerce Commission even now may say that a certain railroad rate is unreasonable, though it may not fix a reasonable rate. Under the new order the nation might do the latter thing—and it would be no very great extension of power. If it were found that the butchers were charging prices for meat out of all proportion to the cost of the cattle that they bought —as they have been known to do—the government, in the interest of all, would almost certainly order the price to be reduced. The coal strike of 1902-3 could have been ended before the evil effects of it were felt outside of the neighborhood where it started; and who will claim that immeasurable suffering, inconvenience and financial loss all over the country should be endured just because a few miners and operators disagree? If a government is not for this purpose, pray, what is it for? In the controversy, which it has been suggested might arise between the farmers and the consumers as to the price of farm products, the government would impose its just will on both parties to the quarrel and see that a fair and reasonable price was established. In a word, it would

instantly ally itself with all the people as against any class that was seeking to win for itself an unfair advantage at the expense of society. As it is now it allies itself with a given class against the whole body of the people. Thus that situation would be entirely reversed.

But, it will be asked, could such a government be trusted? Certainly it could be if the people can be trusted to govern themselves, as we all pretend to believe. And when we say that we believe in the principle of self-government we do not mean that we think that the people are infallible, and so incapable of making mistakes. What we do mean is that the people are honest, intelligent, swayed by good purposes, and are much better fit to govern themselves than any man is to govern them. We mean further that they will be much more patient under their own mistakes than they could be under the mistakes of any one else. They would recognize that the hurt came from themselves, so as there would be no one to punish there would be no basis for discontent or revolution.

It would, to be sure, still be necessary to decide questions of policy by a majority vote, and the danger of a tyranny by majority would not be wholly removed; but it would be greatly lessened. For we should have in government something of that co-operation which it is designed to introduce in the business of production. The government would be more directly by the people and less by the delegated

agents than is now the case. And the overwhelming preponderance of the farmers would strengthen and broaden the foundation of government and would give many more people an interest in it.

Thus the American Society of Equity, merely by calling attention very sharply to the grievances of the farmers, who constitute the largest class in the country, and without having anything directly to do with politics, may be expected to transform our government by restoring it to its first and highest estate.

What does it matter if mistakes are made? They are made now. The people are quite as wise as the politicians and ringsters who now bear rule. And surely the politicians ought to be willing to admit that people wise enough to put them in power are very wise indeed. To hear the defenders of the present system talk you would think that presidents and congresses were never corrupt or wicked or incompetent or foolish. They compare the new scheme with an ideal system, and because it does not measure up to it they condemn it, forgetting that neither does the old system measure up to the ideal. Yet it must ever be borne in mind that we do not advocate any new system—no patent device or trick. What is advocated is old enough, namely, a government which shall be controlled by the people and not by the agents and servants of the people—a strong government, that will protect its citizens and afford that protection quickly—an equitable government, that

secures justice for all. This is the true American theory from which, however, we have widely departed.

One thing which it is desired to secure is new in human governments, and that is justice. If that can be gained all will have been gained. Is it beyond our reach? For ages men have longed for it and struggled for it, but it has always gleamed just ahead of them, and they have never been able to reach it. Is it now at hand? Not ideally or in its fulness, perhaps, for this is an imperfect world of imperfect men, and selfishness is hard to kill. But substantially it can be secured. It can be secured, but only in one way—by enlisting selfishness (self-interest) in the struggle for it. If we can make a large majority of men see that it pays to be just, that they can not have justice themselves unless they are prepared to concede it to others, they will be as zealous fighters against injustice as are the most unselfish and idealistic of people. Men have in the past tried to eliminate selfishness. Now the purpose is to use it on the side of righteousness. The appeal must be made to the intelligence and self-interest of men as well as to their conscience. It ought not to be difficult to make sensible men understand that they would win more by freely yielding to every other man his rights than they could ever hope to win in a fierce scramble for unfair advantages in which they are as likely to be hurt as they are to hurt their brother. The farmer's cause will not be pro-

moted—the Third Power will not rise—on the ruin of other enterprises, but by building up alongside of them will strengthen every other legitimate business and institution.

A great economic writer has given us an allegory showing the wastefulness of a foolish and unenlightened selfishness. He once saw a cage of monkeys being fed. A plate full of food was placed before each monkey, but each one of them, instead of eating from the plate before him, wildly grabbed for the portion of his neighbor. And in the scramble much of the food was lost. What is suggested here is that each man should eat off his own plate and leave his neighbor to consume his meal in peace. Thus all would get enough, and the decencies would be maintained. Society at the present time is very like the cage of monkeys. In both cases there is selfishness, but it is of the silly kind. Surely we can order things better. If we can not, we might as well confess that self-government is a failure, nay, that men are not fit to live together in organized society.

CHAPTER XXII

Then come along! Come along! Make no delay;
Come from every dwelling, come from every way;
Let Equity be in your hearts, and on your banners gay,
Then right and justice will prevail and dwell with us alway.

Such is the argument in favor of the proposed society. For further details as to methods of organization, and rules for government of the society, I refer to the appendix in which the constitution, by-laws, regulations and other details are set forth explicitly. And these have to do directly with another exceedingly important question. Some farmers may say that such a combination would be very desirable, that it would accomplish all the things I have said it would accomplish, and that in every way it would be a good thing for the farmers and the people. But they may ask: Is the plan practicable? This is the great question which reformers always have to answer, and, of course, it is right that they should be required to answer it, for it is to the test of practicability that everything must be brought. A flying machine would be most useful—if it would work. But unless a device of this sort will work there is no sense in paying any attention to it. Always there is

this terrible test. Can the American Society of Equity stand it?

I have not, in what has been said, passed over this question. For it has been shown that organization is the law of industrial progress; that other industries are organized; that all the forces of our civilization are tending toward a closer unity among men; that the farmers have combined successfully already (witness the Grange, Alliance, Farmers' Mutual Association and others), and that every change for the better that has taken place in the farmer's condition —his greater intelligence, his growing sense of dependence on others in the same line, his closer association with others through the medium of frequent mails, telephones, trolley lines, the growth of cities and towns in the rural regions, and his greater use of machinery—all points the way to organization, and makes it necessary, easy and inevitable. The American Society of Equity is thus working along natural lines and in cooperation with natural forces. So the argument in favor of the possibilities of organizing by this plan is reasonably strong as it now stands. As to its practicability and durability, these depend on the benefits it gives. But a little closer and more detailed examination of it may serve to allay the doubts of the more timorous and conservative. Of course, the great objection is that the scheme is too large and involves too many men. Organization, it is said, is easy when only a few people are concerned, but it is exceedingly difficult when it becomes neces-

sary to take in millions of people, living in widely separated sections of the country, but this objection is based, not on the impracticability of the plan, but on the difficulty without conceding its impossibility. It will undoubtedly be harder to organize the farmers in such a way as to secure united action from them than it is for two men in the same city to form a commercial partnership; but the one is no more impossible than the other.

Surely the farmers in a certain neighborhood can organize without much trouble, and they can agree to abide by certain rules. They have done so and are doing this every day. So of the farmers in another and adjoining sections. Thus far the case is plain enough. If, therefore, the farmers in any given county have organized in the American Society of Equity—and they have in many—does it not follow that they can organize in other counties until a state is organized. If one state can organize another can. In fact, all the states can. If the farmers in the United States can organize (and they have more than once, but on very poor plans), the farmers in Canada can organize, where the needs are as urgent and the conditions are very similar. Now if the farmers in America can organize on this new plan of the American Society of Equity, and for the beautiful and meritorious objects for which it stands, does it not follow that the farmers of Europe can organize, particularly since they need organization even more? I do not admit

the necessity of organizing the farmers of Europe to accomplish all the objects of the American Society of Equity in this country, but organization there will follow. It will be a spontaneous lifting up or following in the lead of the American farmers until they are on the same level. There is not a step in the process which may not be easily taken. Indeed, the work has already been begun and is now going forward with great rapidity. It would not be too much to say that the organization has already been effected. The problem is not one of the creation, but of the extension of the organization. That the organization can be formed has already been demonstrated. But there is another question which may give trouble to some people, and that is, Will the organization work? Unless there is good reason to believe that it will not, we are almost justified in asserting, even in the absence of affirmative proof, that it will, since the presumption is so strongly in its favor. At any rate we may say that the only way to find out positively whether or not it will work, unless it can be absolutely demonstrated that it will not work, is to try it. The man who builds a flying machine does not hesitate to put it to the test. Many men were sure that no ship could ever cross the ocean under steam. Yet when the trial was made it was found that the doubter was mistaken. So it is here. There is, as I believe, a great, new machine. That it can be built has already been proved. Now we want to know whether it will operate. The ma-

chine is being built for benefits. We will leave you to judge if the plan as explained does not provide for every needed timber, all the wheels, levers and cranks; is there a nut, screw, bolt, rivet or nail lacking? Don't it look that all that is needed is the co-operative help of one million American freemen to man it, when it will start and continue forever to supply the needs of the entire agricultural needs of this greatest of countries? In order to be sure either that it will or will not work we must give it a trial.

We have seen what it would accomplish, assuming that it will work. Are not these objects worth taking some risk—especially when the risk is so slight to secure? If the machine breaks down the loss to each individual will be inappreciable; if it moves, his gain will be tremendous. You risk infinitely more on every crop you put out or every head of live stock you put in the stall, not knowing whether you will get your money back or not. If the machine works, it will insure you a liberal return for every dollar invested, or every hour employed in all future time. But why should it not work? It all depends on the farmers. If they come into the organization, are loyal to its rules, are true to one another, and cooperate faithfully and intelligently for the general good, there can be no possible doubt of the success of the plan. No, I will not expect this. All do not need to be loyal, considering the great number of farmers, and the fact that only a small portion of any crop needs to be controlled at any

time. If we admit that the great majority of farmers are stubborn, in fact rebellious, yet they can not affect the accurate working results of this machine. There will still be enough loyal ones left at any time to insure success. In this respect the great numbers of farmers which, in the past, was considered the great element of weakness in a farmers' organization will be its greatest strength, when working on the plan of the American Society of Equity. Give us a number equal to what were in some former farmers' organizations and the definite results will work out almost without an effort on the part of the individual farmer. Farmers should remember that they are not to be ruled from the outside. When the voice of the American Society of Equity is heard, it will be the voice of the farmers themselves.

So what we are to learn is not whether the organization can succeed, but whether the American farmers honestly want it to succeed; therefore, to doubt the practicability of the plan is to doubt the farmers themselves; after the organization has been effected the farmers can kill it if they wish to, but so can a man rob his partner. Railroads combine successfully, and yet how often do we hear of secret cutting of rates in direct violation of the agreement between the roads. So I admit that some of the farmers might play the traitor to the organization, and yet I hold that the organization would win in spite of their treachery. But there would be few

such men among the American farmers; having once decided to give the American Society of Equity a trial they would see to it that it had a fair trial.

The only people incapable of working together in organizations are savages, idiots and the insane. Among these a perverse individualism prevails. Are we to class the farmers in either of these categories? Organization is the great weapon of civilized and enlightened men, and so it is peculiarly the weapon of the American farmer. In his "Notes on Virginia," Thomas Jefferson wrote:

"Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if He ever had a chosen people, whose breasts He has made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. It is the focus in which He keeps alive that sacred fire, which otherwise might escape from the earth. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age or nation has furnished an example."

And writing to John Jay, in 1785, Jefferson said:

"Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty by the most lasting bonds."

What they were in Jefferson's day they are now. Yet it is of such men that we are asked to believe that they, like the insane and savage, are incapable of organization. The farmers are as intelligent as the mechanics, who combine without difficulty and

make their combinations effective. They are even as intelligent as the so-called captains of industry, who, through their organizations, control both the business and the politics of the American people. What the mechanics and capitalists do, the farmers can and will do. To say that they can not organize effectively is to put them in a class by themselves and to rank them infinitely below all other classes. And that is absurd.

One objection remains to be considered: There are those who say that the scheme is too great—that it is beyond the power of men to achieve. This is but another way of stating an objection already considered. But what are men put in this world for, if not to achieve great things? The very greatness of this enterprise, instead of being an objection to it, ought to be one of its chief recommendations. Further, if it has been shown that it is practicable, what matters it how great it is? The greater the better, one would think; besides, system is the servant of the twentieth century business man, and great enterprises frequently work out more definitely than small ones. It is a stupendous campaign in which the farmers are asked to enlist. But that very fact ought to stir their ambition and inflame their zeal. Instead of saying that the plan can not be put in operation, we ought to set ourselves to a consideration of those qualities that are necessary in those who would make it work. Ralph Waldo Emerson—an American prophet who was never staggered by

the great or impossible—has said that "nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." It is so. Therefore, our duty is, not to pick flaws in the proposed scheme; not to make up our minds beforehand that it can not win, but to kindle our enthusiasm to such a point as to make failure absolutely impossible. The cause is worthy; the weapon is at hand and effective; the only weakness, if there is weakness, is our own doubting spirit. The appeal is for men to fight in the cause and to wield the weapon. With them—and they will be had—the Machine of Cooperation will be built. The Third Power will be a real power; the grand American Society of Equity will be a triumphant success, and agriculture will be lifted to the plane where it rightfully belongs.

CHAPTER XXIII

Away with special privilege,
  Away with greed of gain,
Away with cunning schemes of men
  That equal rights restrain.
When Toil goes forth amid the fields,
  Its fruits mankind to bless,
Let Toil say what those fruits are worth,
  Let Toil its own possess.

The plan outlined ought to appeal to European farmers quite as much as to their American brethren. With the cheap land in America, and boundless quantities of it, and by the large use of machinery, the farmers of the United States have forced the price of European wheat, and farm products generally, to an extremely low price. So all the farmers, and not merely those in the United States, have suffered from low prices and inadequately rewarded labor. This American invasion has not been a good thing for any of the farmers. For they have been engaged in a competition that was hurtful to all. Of course the farmers of Europe can not possibly raise prices as long as they are subjected to the competition of American products at the present low prices. The thing to do is, manifestly, to combine to raise prices. Restrictive legis-

lation will accomplish little. In resorting to this, there is, too, the further danger of raising prices so high that people can not or will not buy. The farmers can check the present competition by combination more easily, and more effectively, than governments can kill it by law.

And the key to the situation is in the hands of the Americans. If they will refuse to compete with Europeans on the present basis, and will combine with them to lift the price of farm products all over the world, it is clear that, though competition will not be destroyed, it will be put on such a basis as to make it possible for all to profit. Every advance of price here, provided it be firmly held, will raise the price of the competing product abroad.

A combination among American farmers even without help from abroad would have that effect. It would establish a level below which the European farmers would not need to go in competing with one another. But with all the farmers in the combination the effect would be much more marked.

It seems strange that the European farmers should look for salvation to their most dreaded competitors, but it is from these latter that salvation must come. For they have found that in beating their European rivals they have also injured themselves. Now they propose to take themselves out of the unprofitable struggle for cheapness. And until they do withdraw from that struggle there will be no hope for any one. So this chance is of-

fered to the farmers of Canada, France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, the Argentine, far-off India, and, in short, the world where food for man and beast are grown, in the confident expectation that they will eagerly embrace it. The arguments that prove that organization will be a good thing for the American farmers prove, also, that it will be a good thing for the farmers everywhere. For the same conditions that operate against the former operate against the latter, and there is the additional element of American competition.

Let it be distinctly understood that the organization proposed is industrial rather than political. For nations differ in their forms of government and in their political institutions, and a political program that would work well in one country might not work at all in another. Production, however, is the same the world over. Everywhere it depends on the three factors, land, labor, and capital, and the problem is the same everywhere, namely, to secure a fair reward to all three. There is no reason why the Third Power should not operate as effectively and beneficently in Russia as in the United States, in India as in the Argentine. The farmers in all these countries are interested in checking speculation, in preventing the speculators from playing off the products of one against the other, and in securing fair prices for what they raise. In a word, their interests are identical. Therefore, all can easily cooperate.

The farmers of other countries need the society

even worse than those of the United States do. They have smaller farms and they work dearer land —and land that is more in need of constant renewing and fertilizing. They need to make even a higher interest on their investment than is necessary in this country, in order to be sure of a decent living. When they come in competition with American wheat, grown on large farms and on land that is yet cheap, they are at a serious disadvantage. There is not a farmer in Russia who does not know that it would be easier for him to compete with American wheat at a dollar than with American wheat at fifty, sixty or seventy cents. And if the Russian buyer were unable to get wheat from abroad at a lower price than that established by the Russian farmers, he would be compelled to take Russian wheat. Nor are the American farmers at all disturbed at the prospect of all farmers getting good prices for their products. They know that there is a demand for all the staple crops that is ever likely to be raised—that the market is big enough for all. The trouble is that the crop of one country is used to depress the price of the crops of other countries, and thus all have suffered.

It is this well-known fact that makes international cooperation desirable, and to make the benefits of the society world wide. Buyers operate on an international basis. Sellers must, if they would protect themselves against imposition, do the same thing. Thus business, and not politics, is the object

of the organization. The question is not whether a man is a Republican or a Democrat, a Liberal or a Conservative, a supporter or an opponent of the government, but simply and solely whether he wants to end the bad, uncertain and unprofitable system of the past. Elevate his business on a plane with the best of others, and make the best possible man out of himself. It is from this point of view that rulers and people alike are asked to consider this plan. The combination is one of the world's producers for their own, and so for the world's good. It is proposed to antagonize nothing except unfair commercial and industrial conditions. And when it is known that those conditions operate to injure by far the largest class of people in the world, surely no one can object to having them removed.

So the organization will be, and indeed has been, extended to other countries than the United States. The Russian farmers are roused, and are moving in the same path which the American farmers are asked to tread. Societies similar to the American Society of Equity will soon be organized in the Czar's dominions and other countries. The interest is intense wherever the plan has been developed. No man to whom it has been explained has failed to be convinced. Its simplicity, and, at the same time, its wide scope, its effectiveness, its justice and its equity, have all served to commend it to reasonable men. Whether a man lives in Russia or India, the United States, or elsewhere, he wants at

least a fair chance to make his living and care properly for his family. On this platform all can stand. It is the platform of the American Society of Equity. And this is the reason why it is so well adapted to act internationally. The invitation, therefore, is as broad as humanity. The call goes to all, and from all. For their own good a favorable response is earnestly desired. It comes from men who are firmly determined to control their own business in their own interest, and to quit paying unfair toll to the speculators and middlemen who so long preyed on the productive industries of the world.

CHAPTER XXIV

Let justice reign o'er our mighty band;
Let our hearts with triumph fill;
Let all awake, ere 'tis too late,
And every foe we'll still.
In unity we'll conquer all—
Oh, may the day be near
When with God and right we will reign as might,
With conscience bright and clear!

Oh, why should we, to whom life depends,
Be trampled in the dust?
While others gain, we writhe in pain,
For want of right and just.
If one and all would for duty strive,
Then sorrow soon would end;
We supreme would reign and our rights we'd gain—
On no one we'd depend.

As a final word, it seems to be necessary to urge the thought that success would not involve the enslavement or control of any one class, but the freedom of all the people. It has been said that the struggle to which the farmer is invited is one for emancipation. What is sought is as little government regulation as possible, and the widest possible opportunity for each one to work out his own destiny. The removal of obstacles rather than the imposition of new restrictions is the end sought.

Undoubtedly men who prey on others must be restrained, but even this restraint will be in the interest of general liberty. That man is not free who does not get a fair reward for his own toil undiminished by tax for the benefit of his fellow citizens. So the vice of our present system is, that it is not based on liberty. And the farmers are those from whom liberty is withheld. So it all comes to a question of freedom. In doing away with the present abuses we are attacking not simply commercial and industrial unfairness and oppression, but tyranny. It is not insisted that any man shall have less than he is entitled to, but that all men shall have all that they are entitled to. Liberty, then, is the great aim of the American Society of Equity.

And there can be no real justice where there is not liberty. For justice is, by its very nature, something that is due to a man; a debt owing to him; something to which he is entitled. When it is given or conceded to him as a favor or privilege coming from a benevolent despot, it is not really justice at all. Justice is not a thing to be granted, but one to be demanded. So when the American people came to frame their new and free government under the constitution they declared that one of their purposes was to "establish justice." They knew that a government could not be free unless it was just, or just unless it was free. And they were right. Surely this is a good precedent—one to which every American citizen should bow in reverence. But the appeal is

not to one people, but to all people. The greatest merit of the plan is that it does not antagonize any government. It seeks the cooperation of all governments, which, no matter what their form, are without exception based on the idea that the good and prosperity of the subject or the citizen must be their chief consideration.

If the rulers of the earth believe this, and they all profess to do so, they will find a valuable and useful ally in the American Society of Equity. All that is asked is that the men who feed the world should themselves be decently fed. Even in the most absolute monarchies it is of the first importance that the people should be happy, contented and prosperous. And that government is wise which exerts itself to the utmost to secure that result. When this can be achieved without cost or peril to the government, it would seem as though no objection could be raised even by the most absolute ruler to any plan that appeared likely to bring the result to pass. Kingdoms have been known to go to war for the sake of diverting the attention of the people away from ill conditions at home. There have, in the history of the race, been many wars prompted by this motive. But such relief is only temporary. For after the war is over we find that the same evils exist, and that the burden of taxation imposed by the war only makes them worse and increases the discontent of the people. So, at most, war undertaken for this purpose is a mere palliative. What is wanted is a permanent remedy.

And the true remedy is one which is not only consistent with peace, but one which demands peace. The late Lord Tennyson wrote of his vision of what the earth was one day to be:

> "Robed in universal harvest, up to either pole she smiles,
> Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles."

That is the ideal. Abundance for all, general content, the greatest productiveness, justice, honest pay for honest toil, and universal peace—these are the things that the American Society of Equity would have the world enjoy. To keep the people happy is better than going to war to make them forget their unhappiness. It is in this direction that we must look for federation, not of Europe against America, not of one class against another, not of the people against their government—but of all people, of all the nations for the general good. It is through such industrial and commercial alliance that political alliances must come. The Russian, the American, the Argentine, the Indian and all other farmers ought to be friends, not enemies. They will be friends when relieved from the spell of the speculators and gamblers in farm products, the market manipulators and false crop reporters. And when they are friends their governments will be friends.

So this society is not American except as it is domiciled in America. It is world-wide, and there is not a toiler in the world who will not be benefited

by it. What has been said to, and of, American farmers applies to all farmers, and this organization is meant for all farmers. It all comes to the scriptural doctrine that the laborer is worthy of his hire. To withhold his hire from him, or any part of it, is to weaken all government and to impair the foundations on which society must rest. While to insure him his just reward is to strengthen the social order and to build anew the foundations of the political structures of the world.

Years before it came to pass, Arthur Young, traveling in France, predicted the great revolution that took place in that country more than a hundred years ago. He based his prophecy simply on the fact that the people were being robbed by the church and the nobility, and robbed to such an extent that they did not have enough left to live on. We are wiser in our generation, in that we do not push our spoliation to such an extreme point. But we want, not simply to avoid revolution, but to make all the people happy. The question is, not how much we can safely take from them, but how much we can give them. And when we are asked to give them only what is already theirs, in equity, with the assurance that by doing so we shall make them happy, shall we hesitate?

Peace, happiness, truth, justice, order, the death of anarchy, firmly established governments, the reign of law, contentment and satisfaction, together with real and widely diffused prosperity, and to

crown it all a real federation of the nations—surely these are things worth striving for. St. Paul said: "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" And the Psalmist wrote to his people in their captivity: "For thou shalt eat the labors of thine hands; O well is thee and happy shalt thou be." We seek the fulfillment of these prophecies. There is not a human being in the world, and not a government in the world that will not be better because of the triumph of the Third Power through the American Society of Equity.

APPENDIX

How to Secure Profitable Prices for Farm Products.
Financial Benefits.
How the Various Crops Will Be Controlled and Prices Made.
How Farmers of the South May Solve the Cotton Price Problem.
How to Calculate the Farm Values of Crops on the Plan of the A. S. of E.
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Marketing Controlled and Uncontrolled.
The Farmer and His Powerful Friends now Rated as Antagonists.
Capitalized Corporations no Relief to Farmers.
Shall Farmers Form a Union?
How Concentrated Wealth May Ruin Agriculture.
Shall Farmers Pay Something to Market Their Crops?
Practical Organization.
Equity Appeals to All Classes.
How the South Has Blindly Suffered.
The Union Label.
To Whom Be the Credit?
The Tree of American Industries.
Boards of Trade Are the Devil's Workshops.
You Are Interested in the American Society of Equity, because
Farmers, What Are You Going to Do About It?
The American Society of Equity of N. A.
Plan of the American Society of Equity.
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HOW TO SECURE PROFITABLE PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS

(Address by J. A. Everitt ,President of The American Society of Equity, at Portland, Jay County, Ind., Farmers' Institute, December 3d, 1904.)

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I am here at the request of some of your citizens. They asked me to come and tell the farmers of this rich agricultural county how to secure profitable prices for your crops. Is it not a little strange that you should send to me to come to tell you how to do this thing, or that you should wait until the year 1904 before you seek for instruction on this most important matter? How can it be possible in this Twentieth Century that such an important class of people need to send so far to have a person come to tell them how to get profitable prices FOR WHAT ARE YOUR OWN, AND WHAT OTHER PEOPLE ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE? Surely this indicates that something is radically wrong. Let us see!

I have been accused of making people discontented. I plead guilty to the charge. I have never been contented, or I would not have developed my various enterprises until they are known all over the world. I can point to every business man and every professional man in the country who has attained great success and say they were discontented, and, because of discontent they forged onward and upward, achieving great success. Show me the most successful farmers and largest land owners in this part of Indiana, and I will show you discontented people. Show me any man or boy who is content with his present condition, and I will show you people who, if there were enough of them, would kill any town, any community and any nation. Therefore, I want it known that I will not be content until every farmer in the world learns how to get profitable prices for his crops. I preach discontent so those who are oppressed may throw off the yoke of bondage. I hope there is not a young man here who is not discontented with the old system of having a set of speculators and gamblers price the crops you work so hard to produce, and if the present farmers will not rise to completely overthrow the vicious system, that they will, before they come into the

active work of farming. I say blessed is discontent, because of it we reach our earthly goal and merit an entrance into heaven.

FARMERS' TROUBLES.

The greatest curse that ever afflicted this country of wonderful natural resources and almost limitless possibilities is the exploitation, by non-producing classes, of our greatest producing class—the farmers.

Notwithstanding the fact that all the agricultural products that have been produced in the past have been consumed, consequently should have always brought a fair price to the producers, because they were desired, we all know that farmers have made less progress toward individual wealth, previous to the past two years, than any other class of people.

While this is a fact, and a deplorable one, it is no less astonishing that among all the institutions, public and private, ostensibly maintained for the benefit of farmers, not one has ever attempted to better the farmers' condition through steady and fair prices for his crops.

The appropriation by the National Government to the Department of Agriculture is over five million dollars annually, yet not one dollar of this has, to the best of my knowledge, been used DIRECTLY for the object of securing fair and equitable prices for farm crops. This feature appears to have not been in the minds of our public officers. Besides the general Government appropriation the individual states appropriate an aggregate of perhaps a million dollars more; while many agricultural colleges and experiment stations are maintained by general and private contributions; about three hundred papers and magazines are printed in the interest of agriculture, and thousands of institutes are held as schools to teach farmers.

Notwithstanding the enormous effort put forth for agriculture as explained, until two years ago the prices gradually were sinking to a lower level, and only when providence came to the assistance of farmers by preventing them from growing large crops, could good prices be made and maintained. Any person who will go to the trouble to investigate statistics can easily see that whenever farmers grew large crops, prices were low, and when the seasons were bad and they could only grow short crops the prices were good. Thus when they won in the crop they lost in the price, but when they won in the price they lost in the crop. This is true, and if you have not been thinking about it in the past you better think about it now and in the future.

The pricing of farm crops has thus been ignored by all your institutions and supposed helpers, even to the extent

that the subject of profitable prices never appears on your institute programs. All this money, and equipment, and effort that I have referred to have been directed to raising larger crops, or better crops; yet, ever since the modern method of making prices on boards of trade has obtained, the larger the crops the lower has been the price, even to the terrible extent that some of the largest crops sold for LESS money than the smallest crops. This is true, as any person can easily learn for himself or herself, by referring to the United States Department of Agriculture reports.

The annual report of 1903, submitted by Secretary Wilson, begins with the following introductory statement:

"The development of the department toward doing all that should be done to help our people SECURE A GREATER YIELD FROM THE SOIL AND ENHANCE THE VALUE OF ITS PRODUCTS made the training of experts in the department a necessity."

From the foregoing introductory statement, in said annual report of the secretary, it will be seen that he considers the paramount duty of the United States Department of Agriculture is the securing of greater yields from the soil. Thus, the organization of farmers as represented by the Department of Agriculture is wholly based on the theory, that greater yields from the soil enhance the value of its products. But is this so? Is this theory correct and sound? Every boy on the farm should know it is not. Yet all your institutions, your farm papers, your teachers and lecturers are goading you on to increased production and not one of them will tell you how to get a fair price for what you do produce. The demand is now, not for larger crops, but to get a fair price ALWAYS for such crops as you do raise.

Let me digress: I have before me a pamphlet headed, "General List of Topics." It was sent out by the headquarters of farmers' institutes in Indiana, as a guide to County Institute Committees in making up their programs. The list comprises 95 topics, and fully half of them are subjets that will be sealed questions with farmers until they can remove the uncertainty of prices of farm crops. The other subjects are principally along the line of teaching how to produce larger crops, which, under the old system was against the farmer's interests and to the interests of the handlers and consumers. Thus it will be seen how useless the institutes have been to farmers.

In the first class of topics are these: "Business Method in Farming;" "The Ideal Farm Home;" "The Farmer Boy and His Opportunities;" "Give the Boy a Chance;" "The Problem of Hired Help on the Farm;" Does the Farm Pay?" "Are Not the Failures in Farming Due to the Lack of

System?" etc., etc. How can any institute speaker speak instructively to any intelligent farmer audience while the old system prevails, when a class of non-producers set the prices on every farm product, and set the wages for farmers and their families without any regard or reference to equity or the cost of production? Talk about "system" under such conditions. You may as well call black, white, and attempt to prove your assertion.

But the chief aim with your teachers is to show you how to produce larger crops or how to produce more cheaply. So fierce has became the strife among farmers, led on by their teachers, to produce cheaply and abundantly, that they have stimulated the best inventive genius of the country to invent new and superior machines; to prepare more effective fertilizers, to originate new and more productive grain and vegetables and to improve live stock so that they will grow faster and take on fat quicker.

Your wonderful plows, cultivators, binders, hay loaders and unloaders; side delivery rakes and improved stock; even the fertilizer you buy to increase productiveness, the books and papers you read to tell you how to grow larger crops and the lectures you hear, are powerless to better your financial condition. In fact they are harmful under the old conditions when you are putting forth every effort to increase production without the power to set the price. They help to defeat what should be the prime object and hope for every effort put forth, viz:—financial reward—because the larger the crops you grow the lower is the price. I defy you to show me any instance where the benefits resulting in cheapening and increasing production, has not resulted in lowering of the price of the product, thus benefiting the middlemen and consumers instead of the producers.

The demand from buyers, manipulators and consumers, is for big crops and low prices. When your crops are large, whether because of a favorable season, good seed, or skillful management, the press of the country congratulates you on your success. Yet, they should know that big crops have been the farmers' curse ever since the old system of marketing and the present system of price making on boards of trade, have been in existence. As the crop goes on to maturity without mishaps the price falls in the same or increasing ratio. You have seen it many times. More than fifty years ago a report to the British Board of Trade took the ground that, by keeping the price of cotton down American planters would be compelled to increase their production in order to make up for smaller price per pound or bale. And so it has been with every American farm crop.

The policy has been pursued on all sides with ruthless

severity. The combined and co-operating influence of the vast buying, speculating, manufacturing and consuming interests of the world are against the growers of our agricultural products—the creators of the most desired, in fact the only absolutely essential products of the earth (besides air and water), our food and the material for our clothing.

So also railroads open up new territory so production will be increased and there will be more tonnage to haul, knowing full well, that they will receive as much toll to carry a cheap bushel as a dear one. Even the United States Government has undertaken to bring the vast Western arid region under cultivation through the expenditure of fabulous wealth so the production will be greater; so there will be more people in competition with you; so railroads will have more cheap farm products to haul; so they can pay greater dividends on watered stocks; so consumers may have the necessities of life cheaper and pay for luxeries dearly.

Farmers of Jay County, how do you like the program? Are you satisfied with it? Is it not time that you have a head to your entire business, to demand your rights and protect your interess? Or do you prefer to perpetuate the present system and by and by have guardian set over you.

There was a time when supply and demand were the factors that fixed the price of nearly all kinds of products. But that time has been past these many years. Lately organized non-producers and boards of trade fix or manipulate the price of every staple agricultural product, regardless of supply or demand, and regardless of the rights and welfare of producers or consumers. From year to year the crowds of middlemen, speculators and gamblers have been on the increase, because they recognize the grand opportunities of operating between the horde of unorganized producers on one side and an equal number of unorganized consumers on the other side. Where the carcasses are, there the vultures gather. Thus we see the phenomena in modern political economy of the distance between the producer and the consumer gradually lengthening and the price constantly widening. When the buyer, be he middleman, speculator, food trust, manufacturer, or consumer, sets the price he sets it as low as possible, so he can win as much profit as possible. It has always been so, and always will be so. But when the seller sets the price he sets it to protect himself. THIS IS WHAT FARMERS MUST DO—SET THEIR OWN PRICE.

And why not? Somebody sets the price on every bushel or pound of stuff you produce. Let me ask you now, who

has a better right than you have yourself? You produce the crops. You know what they represent in investment and toil. You know what demands are on you for living, taxes, renewals, etc. Therefore, you should be the person to set the price or have it set to always return you a profit.

In every other line of human endeavor the maker or owner of a commodity sets his price on it. It is so with the manufacturer, the banker, the merchant, the professional man and the laborer. The farmer cannot buy a machine, any groceries, or clothing, or borrow money, or hire a hand without he pays the price set by the other people, and it is agreed upon before the goods or services are delivered. You know this is true. But how has it been with farmers? They, with their wives and perhaps with their children, work hard all summer to produce the finest and most necessary product on earth, never knowing what wages they will be paid per hour, or day, or week, or month, until finally, after months, their work is completed and another set of people take the crops off of their hands at prices fixed by themselves. The price paid for the crops represents the wages paid for all the hard labor, and it has been the poorest wages, in the past drawn by any grade of workmen in the country. Is this not so?

So advantageous is this arrangement to the other people that it has been stated that the capitalists would have grabbed up the land long ago if it were not for the fact that the farmers work cheaper by the present arrangements than they could be hired to work under any other arrangement.

I want every farmer here to examine himself and see how much he has accomplished at farming and then consider that there is no certainty about his business in the future while the old system of marketing continues. A few years of good crops if the speculators are allowed to make the prices, may bankrupt many of you. But, we need not take your individual cases. We will take the average farmers. Those who are responsible for the average yields of our crops, as follows: Wheat, 12 bushels per acre; corn, 25 bushels; oats, 26 bushels, etc. The average farmer represents the masses. He represents the average of intelligence and natural endowment. In a movement such as this he must be put on a basis for opportunities so he can live and keep his family like an American citizen should. If this can be accomplished, you, who may be more favorably situated, or better endowed—who raise more than the average crops—must not complain at the money you make.

Besides the needs for a change as already enumerated there are many others. The old system of marketing is

totally bad. It has been responsible for more misery, disappointment, breaking up of families, and financial loss than anything else outside of the drink habit.

While our government makes laws to regulate other evils, no laws are made against gambling in farm products. This gambling in the products of the farm and limitless exploitation of our farmers by the shrewdest and most unscrupulous classes of citizens, is responsible for a whole catalogue of iniquities. Among them we mention child labor on the farm. Our foreign markets have been lost by low prices set by market manipulators. The boys and girls leave the farm because of insufficient reward. Laborers have deserted the farm because farmers cannot pay the market price for labor. And so I might bring up every ill that afflicts the farmers' business to-day and they are all the result of uncertain and insufficient prices for his products. It also follows as truly as the needle of the compass always points to the north; as surely as the seasons follow each other and as day follows night, that, when farmers get fair prices always, all these troubles will disappear. Farmers will then come to the front to remain there. Their's will be the preferred profession and farming will be the best business in the country.

My friends, to bring about this desirable and happy consummation I am devoting my life energies.

* * *

But how can farmers change these things? And how will they be changed?

This is a great problem. It's solution has never been attempted before since crops were grown. You may think it is too stupendous for mortal men to undertake. You may think of the immense number of farmers and say, "Oh, it can't be done; they won't stick together; they won't cooperate." But let me tell you, you are mistaken. You overestimate the magnitude of the undertaking. I am going to surprise you by telling you that it is a very simple problem and the very fact that there are millions of farmers is what makes it simple, easy and certain in results.

In the first place I want to remind you that you raise just one crop a year of each variey. One crop of corn, one crop of wheat, one crop of cotton, one crop of fruit, etc.

I also want you to understand that it takes a whole year to consume a crop of any variety. Is this not so?

In the past you have been in the habit of marketing the bulk of your crops soon after harvest. Because of this there have been great elevators, warehouses and cold storage houses built all over the country and in all large cities. These don't belong to you, but they belong to another set of

people. Now, you see, YOU produce the stuff, but THEY soon get possession of it. They knew you would let go of it; hence, they just built the storehouses and waited until you went to them and asked them what they would give you and they gave you just as little as possible. These men did not have the same interest in the crops that you should have. But the enormous accumulations in central markets have been used as clubs to beat down the prices of any more of the same crops, whether on the farm or elsewhere. When the consumers wanted supplies they did not need to go to the farm for them, but they dealt with the warehouse men, while you kept feeding more crops in without any regularity or system.

As it requires the world a year to consume your crops what would be more reasonable than for you to require a year in which to market them? Who will pay as much for a year's supply if marketed in a month, as if dealt out over twelve months? Supose a year's suply of coal had to be marketed in a month, could the seller maintain the price as well as if put on the market over twelve months? Suppose the Standard Oil Company with its enormous wealth found it necessary, or thought it was necessary, to market a year's supply of oil in a month, would the price be maintained? Or if the clothing merchant closed out all his year's supply of clothing, including overcoats, in August, would he get good, profitable prices for them? It is just as ridiculous, wasteful and as damaging, if not criminal as regards your family, for farmers to sell the bulk of their crops in a few weeks or a few months.

The seller's haste makes the buyer's opportunity. But by controlling the supply of any article until the season arrives when it is wanted—when the demand is ready for it and seeks it—then the seller can set his price and get it. This is all there is to your problem of marketing and price-making. CONTROLLED MARKETING is the key. CONTROLLED MARKETING will compel the price. CONTROLLED MARKETING is everything. CONTROLLED MARKETING will solve all your problems.

Keep your crops off the market until the demand seeks them at your price. Hold your crops until they are needed for consumption. Keep them out of elevators and warehouses and back on the farms. And why not? Somebody holds them until the demand for consumption comes. The world can't consume them all at once, but the world gets hungry three times a day for 365 days in a year. You may say, "Suppose the demand don't come?" or, "Suppose the demand won't pay my price?" Don't have any fear. It is bound to come. All the crops that are raised are needed,

and have been for years. Also, the world will consume as much at a fair price as at an unfairly low price. The world cannot do without your crops. It don't need just part of them, but all of them and it will not be over particular about the price, because it means life or death and comfort to people and domestic animals. The only thing is, if it can't get your crops at the buyer's price, it will pay your price.

Market a year's crop over a year. If the price is not right at the start, hold and you will get it. There are enough now educated to this plan that they represent a large part of every large crop and these parts cannot be spared from consumption; hence, the price MUST come. When the organization is large enough the fair price will begin as soon as the first of any crop is ready for market. Now you may need to wait a while. It required eight months to raise the 1903 wheat crop from under 70 cents to $1 a bushel, but it required only two months to raise the 1904 wheat crop from $1 to $1.20.

Do you ask, "How will I know when to sell?" I reply, "When the buyers will pay your price." Your price will also be the price of every other Union farmer in the country. All you need to know is the price. But what is your price? The MINIMUM price. And what is the minimum price? This is the lowest price at which any of the crop should be sold and is a PROFITABLE price. You will learn the minimum price from the farmers' headquarters and through the official paper.

This makes it necssary to explain the plan of co-operation to control marketing and make prices:

* * *

There is only one practical plan under heaven by which farmers can do these things, and it is represented by the AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY. The plan would work just as well if called by any other name, or without a name, if that was desired. But the name is a good one, because farmers only want equity, and this name is a constant notice that when they are powerful through co-operation they will give equity.

The A. S. of E. is incorporated and has headquarters at Indianapolis, Indiana. It has no capital stock to sell. In fact it has nothing to sell. It is an educational society. It is educating every farmer the new way to market and when they are all educated it will keep on running forever without any more expense than just enough to get the advice to each member. Cheap enough, isn't it? But it has made individual farmers, hundreds, up to a thousand or more dollars every year they belonged to it, and has

been responsible for the farmers of the United States receiving, or they will receive, $1,194,233,917 more for six crops last marketed or in process of marketing than they ever received for crops of the same kind and of the same size. Farmers, think of this. The A. S. of E. don't aspire to sell capital stock to farmers or to have a large capital stock. It don't need it; but it is going to put money in the hands of farmers. They will have the capital and then they can do everything they want to do.

The minimum price is made by a board of directors, or may be made by national conventions, as was the case with tobacco at Lynchburg, Va. Members are not bound to sell at the minimum price nor to hold for it. They may take more if the market goes above the minimum price. This price is made only once a year on any crop; hence, you will never more need those pesky market reports, which change several times a day. When farmers are largely organized on this plan the prices of wheat, corn, oats, cotton, hogs, cattle, eggs, etc., will be as steady and as certain as the prices of plows, binders, cultivators and interest on money are now. No frequent fluctuations, no blind guessing, no buying or selling of futures, no gambling or speculating.

The minimum price, crop reports, and all advice, will be sent from headquarters to farmers and members everywhere through an official newspaper. Thus all farmers will have the same price and advice about the same crops at the same time. All may be influenced the same way and all can act as a unit.

As there are millions of farmers you naturally fear that they can not work together to control marketing and compel the price. Therefore, I will try to show you how it will work.

You know that a single individual is weak. A singe railroad president could not do much in the way of making and maintaining rates on all the roads, but five railroad presidents make rates for practically all the railroads in the country, and maintain them. A singe laborer is weak and could do little toward setting the price for his labor, but a great many of them organized and now they have fixed the price for labor, and they maintain it. They have set the price so high that farmers cannot afford to pay it, and that's the reason you have your farm labor problem. A single farmer is weak and is powerless to make prices on his crops, but a million farmers all speaking through a central head; all having the same advice; all influenced by the same impulse, and all acting for their self-interests, will be irresistible. I will qualify this, and will say that all don't need to act together when it comes to marketing crops and making

prices. The world consumes an immense amount of supplies each day, hence, an immense number can market every day. Also, the market is very sensitive to conditions and you have seen it advance on account of damage to a crop. Now, farmers holding crops will produce the same temporary condition as a short crop, and a million farmers or more in a movement to control marketing and make prices, will represent much more than a small percent of the crop. Hence, if a great many of these million farmers would be stubborn and work against their own interests, the desired results would still be acomplished. We might say, that, in working out this plan where crops are controlled on the farm, no crop will appear larger than what comes on the market at any time.

An individual is weak. The larger the class to which that individual belongs, the weaker he is. The agricultural class is the largest class; hence, the individual farmer is the weakest person when standing all alone. But when the farmers are organized and co-operating, they will be the greatest union and the most powerful body on earth. Then the unit, or individual farmer, will be as strong to accomplish any object for his good as the combined strength of the millions of units.

If there were only a thousand farmers, I might despair of organizing them to accomplish any definite results, because a few stubborn farmers might disrupt the whole organization or prevent co-operation. But with the millions of farmers there will always be enough to do the reasonable, fair and equitable things recommeded, and there will never be enough of the stubborn and contrary element to prevent definite results. For this reason I say the great number of farmers, which is sometimes considered the element of weakness, is the element of greatest strength in a farmers' movement to make prices.

OTHER FEATURES OF THE PLAN

To cary out this plan there is a central body called the National Union. The society has the usual officers, and the affairs of the society are regulated by a board of directors, comprising seven members or more. The society makes a specialty of securing crop reports on every crop from its members. The minimum price is based on the yield of any crop and the known consumption of the crop. It will be higher in years of short crops than in years of large crops, and always a profitable price. Farmers anywhere can join the National Union, and all members belong to the National Union. An individual farmer, no matter where he lives, can co-operate and receive benefits as long as he can be reached by the U. S. mails. Besides the

National Unions, there are local unions all over the country. It is expected to have them in each school district. All the work is done directly from headquarters with the individual member and with the local unions.

The prices are based on the leading or central market. Thus, grain prices are based on Chicago, cotton on New York, beans on Detroit, clover-seed on Toledo, etc. The farmers' price will be the central market price less freight and a fair commission to the buyer or shipper. In places where no surplus for shipping is produced, the farmers' price may equal the central market price or exceed it, depending on the local conditions. Usually the farther east the farmers live the higher should be the prices. Thus, in New York City, prices should be higher than in Chicago; and in Pennsylvania higher than in Illinois.

The minimum prices are announced by bulletins in the official paper. All members get them at the same time. The list of minimum prices is published constantly in the paper.

Members, as I have said, are not required to enter any obligations to sell at the minimum price nor hold for it. They have as much liberty and latitude when members of the society as before. The whole proposition is based on self-interest. I believe people can, and will, co-operate to do things that are to their own interest to do, without any binding agreement. Also, in this plan, those who not belong and do not get the official paper, cannot make as much profit from their crops as those who do belong. This has been demonstrated many times already. This plan is based on financial benefits and to suspend its workings or kill it, will be a great financial loss to every member. Hence, no agreement or bond is necessary, but the members will see that it is perpetuated, so it will continue to give benefits forever.

RIGHT TO MAKE PRICES

In every community there are some people who are opposed to an organization by farmers for the object of making prices, on the ground that it would be a trust. Now, I want to appeal to these people to understand this matter. They must admit that somebody makes prices on everything they have to sell. Also, they must admit that oftentimes the price is too low for them, and when it reaches the consumer is too high. Under such conditions will it be wrong to step in and make a fair price for yourself and by co-operation guarantee a fair price to the consumer? Certainly not. It is your legal right, it is also a moral right—"the laborer is worthy of his hire." Also, if you think you, who created the property, have no right to

price it, how can you delegate this right to a lot of non-producers, speculators, gamblers, food trusts, cotton factors, malt syndicates, etc.? But this is not a trust, because each individual absolutely controls his own product and is a free agent. The National Union does not name an arbitrary price on any one thing, but recommends an equitable price and then depends on the common sense of farmers to ask and hold for this price. Thus, the whole plan is simple and its working must be reliable, although automatic. Farmers can live within themselves and do without the other people's goods a long time. But the other people can not do without the farmers' goods long. They must get some every day, and must have all every year. Considering the great number of farmers now co-operating on this plan, they absolutely will bring the demand to the agreed price before the last of the season, if they cannot force it there at the first.

SOME OF THE RESULTS

The future of American agriculture, and I may say of industrial America, depends on the price farmers obtain for their products.

Good prices will insure good farming, increased average yields and guarantee sufficient production to keep pace with the rapidly increasing consumption. Good prices for our farm products will insure a market for your surplus in every country that is unable to produce an abundance for its own needs. But low prices will mean poor, slovenly farming, hard work, a desire to put out all creation to make both ends meet, and occasionally bankruptcy for farmers, as has occurred in the past. Keep your prices low and your products will be shut out of every foreign market, because farmers in those countries will be reduced to pauperism if they must compete with you. Good prices always mean everything for farmers and through them the country merchants will prosper, and in turn the city jobbers. Rural America will be transformed. Country towns will enjoy such prosperity as not dreamed of before, and cities will take on a degree and quality of prosperity as cannot come through any other source. In short, good prices always for farm crops will guarantee continous prosperity to all industries and all classes.

Politicians, political economists and farm papers may contrast your condition with farmers in some other countries. They tell you that you should be thankful that your condition is so much better. But they don't understand the matter. They should know that you are responsible for the world prices more than any other country, and every exporting country must come to your standard. With your

almost boundless territorry, fertile, virgin soil, hard working farmers, numerous teachers to tell you how to increase crops, and wonderful machinery, you did excell the foreigners on their old worn-out soil that needed expensive fertilizers, on small areas, high-priced land and primitive tools. Prices made by boards of trade that kept body and soul together for you in this country, and in some cases allowed you to lay up a hundred or two a year, did not allow them to do so well. Hence, while your condition has been favorably contrasted, yet you have nothing to brag of. In fact, are you not ashamed of yourselves that you set such a pace for your brother farmers in foreign countries? Your cheap products put in competition with theirs injured them more than the low prices did you, and those farmers will hail with delight anything that will put American farm products on a permanently higher basis. Then your surplus, if you have any, will be welcomed by ever densely populated country in Europe.

Farmers want this thing to come to pass. When they understand the plan they are enthusiastic in its support and are anxious to have it put in operation throughout the country. They will change the old system to the new, because it is to their interest to do so. Show me a man or a set of men who will not do those things that are to their interests. The farmers of America are ready to make the change now. They have been ready before, but they were waiting for the right plan. They are anxious to change to a system that will multiply their resources, increase their profits and elevate themselves socially. Instead of farming being a mere struggle for existence, it will be a life of comfort, and of rewards unsurpassed in any other vocation. Then the farmer will have as large and as certain an income as has the banker, the merchant and the manufacturer, the investment and the effort put forth being considered.

There is nothing visionary, nothing harmful, in this program, but everything for the good of honest people and lgitimate business. Keep our farmers prosperous and the nation prospers, but let agriculture in this country languish because of unprofitable prices, and panics and hard times are inevitable.

The success of the farmers' movement for good prices will solve every farm problem. Then the boys will want to remain on the farm and others will want to go to the farm. The labor problem will be solved, because farmers can pay the market price for labor. Farmers then can make good roads and undertake and carry out any other improvements they want. Much of the land is now run down by hard

cropping and the money returns are not enough to buy fertilizer to renew the fertility. Then, however, these farms can be built up again and intensive farming, which will soon be necessary to meet the requirements of a rapidly increasing population, will result. Irrigation in old States will be one of the results of steady good prices.

At present farmers get very little from their government, because they cannot make themselves felt. When organized on this plan they will speak as a mighty union that represents the bulk of the wealth, products and nearly half the population of the country. Then they will be heard, and their demands will be quickly acted upon. Then they can have post currency, parcels post, the extension of the rural mail service, equitable taxation, pure and honest government, and everything they should have. Also, if the minimum price does not kill gambling in farm products, they only need to whisper to the element dominant in politics, that they want this thing done and gambling will stop.

With profitable prices secured, if the farmers need a national telephone or telegraph system, as I predict they will, it can easily be constructed. By their power and ability to co-operate in obtaining whatever would benefit themselves and the consumers, farmers can then see that their products are delivered to the consumers in the most direct way and with the least possible tax. Then the greatest consumption will result and the maximum markets be secured.

As regards financial benefits, who can compute them? A slight advane on any crop makes an enormous aggregate sum; while profitable prices on all crops means many hundreds of millions of dollars better than unprofitable prices, as have frequently prevailed in the past. With profitable prices assured, every farm will increase in value from 25 to 100 per cent., because of its increased earning capacity. The National Union will be powerful in securing for the farmers what they need from the national government, while the local unions will exercise a power and force for local improvements and the direction of local affairs never before possible.

Such are some of the results that must come if farmers do one simple thing, viz.: Control their marketing and let their crops go on the market during a year to meet a steady demand for a year instead of dumping them in uncertain quantities and at uncertain times to overwhelm the demand. Simple and easy to do. There is scarcely a farmer in the country who cannot help to do this. In thousands of replies to the question sent out in July, 1904,, "Can you hold your wheat till December, if necessary, to get your price?"

Ninety-four percent said they could. It is about the same way with all other crops. Please examine yourself, and is it not so? The rule should be: "If the price is not right when your crop is ready, hold it all if you can. If you cannot hold all, hold what you can, and if you cannot hold any, then sell." Every one who holds makes a better market possible for those who cannot hold. When you can get your price sell all the market will take, but stop the minute it won't take more, and if you have a load of produce in town, haul it home.

A little help by each one; a determination like that displayed by the cotton growers in Texas, who hauled 1,500 bales to town and hauled it home again because they could not get their price, will bring the world to your feet, or people will go hungry and will not be clothed and domestic animals will perish.

My friends, I have shown you the necessity of doing something. I have told you what the something is and how to do it. If what I have said has sunk deep into your hearts, and will in the future be reflected in your actions, this part of Indiana will come to the front never more to return to the old, bad, vicious system that keeps millions in semi-impoverishment and makes a few immensely rich.

And now in conclusion, I will read chapter 24 in "The Third Power." (It is unnecessary to reproduce it here, but I recommend another reading of that chapter.)

(*Extracts from an Address by J. A. Everitt, at Rochester, Minn.*, 1904.)

I intend to make the charge and I do now make it, THAT THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ALL THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES, ALL THE EXPERIMENT STATIONS, ALL THE FARMERS' INSTITUTES ALL THE FARM PAPERS, ALL THE STATE LEGISLATURES, ALL THE NATIONAL CONGRESSES, WITH ALL THE MILLIONS THEY HAVE HAD AT THEIR COMMAND FOR THE GOOD OF AGRICULTURE AND LARGELY CONTRIBUTED BY YOURSELVES, HAVE NOT HELPED YOU TO INCREASE YOUR AVERAGE YIELDS PER ACRE ONE POUND NOR INCREASE THE AVERAGE PRICE OF YOUR CROPS ONE IOTA...ALSO BY BUNGLING LEGISLATION AND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONDITIONS, YOU HAVE LOST YOUR EXPORT MARKETS IN NEARLY ALL THE FOREIGN COUNTRIES. IN SHORT, ALL THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE POWERLESS TO DO YOU ANY GOOD UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS.

For proof of these assertions: First, as to average yields and prices. We refer you to the year book of the Depart- of Agriculture, or elsewhere where the records are kept. Note the average yield of any of our staple crops for as long as records have been kept, and you will see that they are no higher now than many years ago. Look at the aver- age prices and you will see that they average lower in late years. I have examined them very carefully.

Second, as to exports: In years past there was a large export trade in your grain to France, Germany, Italy and other European countries, but you put your prices so low (or those people did, who priced your crops) that the farm- ers of those countries could not meet the competition. The result was a heavy tax against your products, they were largely shut out of the countries. The farmers in those countries, encouraged by the higher price for their crops, enriched their ground, and now raise an average of 30 to 37 bushels of wheat per acre against your average of 13 bush- els. Their averages of other crops are in the same propor- tion, and all because of good prices. France, which is not as large as Texas, raises more than half as much wheat as the entire United States. Think about this. Does it not prove that good prices are more potent than all the teach- ing that can be given? Only one country, England, is open to our farm products. Even there they are agitating the matter of a tariff on our agricultural exports to benefit the farmers at home and in their colonies You can prevent this by acting now. Your only salvation is in higher prices. With prices sufficiently high, you can hold your present for- eign markets, regain old ones, and I predict enlarge all of them. This may seem strange to you, but think about it, discuss it. If you got good prices for your crops would you not be encouraged to build up your exhausted soil, and farm intensively? Good prices will bring good crops. The future of American agriculture depends on prices. If they are made by the farmer on the farm they may be certain, profitable and equitable. If they are made by speculators and gamblers on the boards of trade, as in the past, they will be uncertain, unprofitable and inequitable. It is up to the farmers themselves which they will have? They need not wait on or trust to Congress or state legislatures, or farmers' institutes, or farm papers, or boards of trade, or Providence. If they want to change things they must take hold themselves. If the farmers of Minnesota want to in- crease their assets they must depend upon themselves.

"As the originator of this plan of co-operation, I want to state that I believe a large number of people can co-operate without any binding agreement when the things to be

accomplished are all for their interest, and nothing is asked or expected that will be against their interests or distasteful to them. Self-interest—selfish interest, if you please—is the greatest incentive to do things. The American Society of Equiety is built for benefits to every member: financial, social and moral benefits. Given these, no bond or agreement is necessary to hold the members.

* * *

Is it not to the interest of every farmer to get a profitable price for every crop he grows? Not for the short crops only, but for the good crops and bumper crops. And why not? Don't they all go into consumption? Has there been any surplus? If so, where is it? Where was the surplus dumped or destroyed? There absolutely has not been a surplus of any of our staple crops for many years. They have been consumed. The only question before the farmers is: Will your produce be taken if you always put a fair, profitable price on it? Have you any doubt about this? Will you doubt whether men and women will breathe as long as life lasts and there is air around them? Will you doubt whether human beings and domestic animals will eat as long as food can be had and they will not be over particular about the price? Or will people be clothed? The food we eat and clothing we wear are as essential to life and comfort as the air we breathe.

The people must have them, industries must have them. You have them all first. Do you begin to realize the strength of your position? No person can take them from you if you say no. Yet it is only by getting rid of them that you can prosper. We now come to the gist of the whole matter. We now insert the key that unlocks the combination. It is CONTROLLED MARKETING.

Farmers, you've got to change your system of marketing. I have shown you that the world consumes all your produce. It don't gulp it down in a day, nor a week, nor a month or six months. It requires a whole year. When the year is around it is gone. The demand comes over a whole year, and it is quite regular. You can not force the demand much, hence there has grown up this middle class who come between you and the consumers, purely because of your bad system. Now, how have you been marketing? When you raise a crop you have been dumping it on the market without any regard for the demand on that particular day. This goes on all over the country. The result is, a middle class of people get hold of your grain, cattle, hogs, cotton, vegetables, poultry, eggs, fruit, etc. They put them in elevators and warehouses and report them as 'visible supply.' They don't put them there to stay forever, but to

hold a while until the demand comes. There the speculators and gamblers, also millers and consumers, see the enormous supply, and this very condition keeps the prices down or prevents farmers from putting prices up. As long as there are many million bushels or barrels, or pounds, or dozens in the elevators and warehouses, the farmers are powerless and their produce will not be worth much. Is it not so? Prevent this visible supply in public warehouses, control your marketing to only supply the demand as it appears, and I care not how many millions are out on the farms, you can get your price, and when the year is around your cribs and granaries will be empty just the same as the elevators and warehouses sell their accumulated stocks.

To give a practical illustration of this, refer to wheat. In May, 1903, the price of wheat at Chicago was about 65 to 70c, and the speculators were selling and buying the new crop for future delivery (before it was made remember) at about 63 cents. The American Society of Equity took the matter up and said: "Wheat is worth $1.00 a bushel." It taught the farmers how to get the dollar, by holding the supply off of the market until the demand sought it. Following is from Up-to-Date Farming, and we printed many articles about the equity of dollar wheat in that memorable campaign.

"Other things are up, everything that the manufacturers control has been marked up again and again, for several years past; labor has clamored for more money and has gotten it. Things are at high tide; there is a general swell all around, and there is prosperity all over, except with the farmers. This is the year. The day has come; this is the hour; shall we not say the word, "DOLLAR"—aye, stamp our wheat one dollar a bushel and take no less. It is our right, it is our duty to ourselves and families—it is right. It is equitable. Let every local union in the land where wheat is grown proclaim the price, and then let not one bushel leave the farm except under contract at this price, and the matter will be settled—settled in justice and equity —that the producer, the man who follows the plow and gathers the harvest, may have just reward for his labor."

You, who read the newspapers, know how the press ridiculed the idea of dollar wheat and said that Everitt might better go hang himself. Even the farm papers said it was impossible for the farmers to do this thing, but the campaign for dollar wheat went on. The American Society of Equity had nearly one hundred thousand members, and hundreds of thousands of farmers who were not members believed in the equity of dollar wheat. You know the visible supply of wheat decreased in central markets. Chicago, Buffalo,

New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, etc., instead of measing their stock by several millions, measure a million or a few hundred thousands. Mills were obliged to shut down because of the scarcity. The demand did seek the supply, the price did go up to $1.00, and over the dollar, and has remained there. The dollar wheat in February, March, April, May and June following was all raised in '03. These bushels were full brothers and sisters to the bushels that were sold in July, August, etc., at 70c. The 70c wheat was no more desired than the dollar wheat. If the last end of the crop was worth $1.00 the first end was worth as much. Hence, see the folly of selling out for less. If more farmers had taken our advice, every bushel of the 1903 crop would have sold for $1.00 or more. You grow much barley here and I am informed that the dealers intend to start the buying at 30 cents a bushel. Think of it. You have the barley, but you are not consulted. The malt trust that has controlled barley for years, expects you to walk up and ask them what they will pay for what is your own and which they can not possibly do without. They will tell you 30 cents a bushel. They will make the grade and do the weighing, too. If the farmers in the barley belt (which is quite limited) will organize they can get any reasonable price they ask for the crop now growing. You ought to have a convention of barley growers when the crop is harvested, agree on a price, and you will get it.

Have you noticed how the speculators are pricing your growing crops down lower than present prices? Do you realize that December wheat is 30 cents a bushel lower than present cash wheat, corn about 10 cents lower, oats about 8 cents lower, cotton a few cents, and so on? Don't you see that the other people are going to get your crops as low as possible? They are never low enough to suit the bear speculators, dealers and consumers. I have made some calculations, and the farmers of the United States will be robbed of about one thousand million dollars ($1,000,000,000) if the speculators are successful in reducing the present price to their future price on the growing crops. We want you to understand that if you don't take necessary steps to maintain the present prices or advance them to where they should be the class of non-producers who probably never did a day's hard work in their lives, will rob you of about a thousand million dollars. I say rob you, because what good reason is there for putting the prices down? They will reduce your wages to this extent, for don't you labor all the summer and get your pay out of your crops? SUPPOSE IT WAS PROPOSED THAT A SWEEPING REDUCTION OF WAGES BE MADE FOR FACTORY EMPLOYES,

MINERS, CLERKS; GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, STATE, COUNTY AND CITY; TO THE AMOUNT OF ONE THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS. EVERY NEWSPAPER IN THE LAND WOULD FIGHT THE PROPOSITION AS UNJUST. BUT IT IS PROPOSED TO REDUCE YOUR WAGES TO THIS EXTENT. ANOTHER CLASS OF PEOPLE ARE ACTUALLY SELLING AND BUYING YOUR GROWING CROPS ON THE REDUCED BASIS AND ONLY ONE PAPER IN THE WORLD FIGHTS AGAINST IT. NOT A FARM PAPER, EXCEPT ONE, HAS ENTERED EVEN A WEAK PROTEST AGAINST IT. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? One thing you should do. YOU SHOULD DEMAND OF EVERY INSTITUTION THAT YOU SUPPORT, THAT THEY HELP YOU GET PROFITABLE PRICES WHICH ARE BOUND TO COME THROUGH CONTROLLED MARKETING, AND WHICH WILL COME AFTER EDUCATION. IF THEY WON'T HELP TO MAINTAIN YOUR WAGES AND FIGHT FOR EQUITABLE PRICES, DON'T SUPPORT THEM.

FINANCIAL BENEFITS

The American Society of Equity appeals to farmers from many vantage points as we have already shown. But in no sense does it appeal stronger than from a financial point of view. The time is past when farmers will be content with hard work and a mere living in return from the farm. This kind of independence has lost its attractions, also the fear of a return to low prices and all the resultant evils, including mortgages, is so strong that farmers will embrace any plan that will insure against it. The A. S. of E. plan does insure against these things and does guarantee financial benefits. There are no stronger inducements than profits Therefore, we appeal to you to join this movement on account of the financial benefits that are sure to come. While it is not intended to make all farmers rich, yet it is intended to give all farmers opportunities EQUAL to those enjoyed by any other class of citizens; investments, skill and effort put forth being considered. If you know of no other reason why you should join the A. S. of E., come, because you will make more money by belonging. It matters not how much you farm or how little, nor what you raise. The A. S. of E. is for every section of the country; for every crop, and for every individual engaged in any kind of agricultural pursuits.

HOW THE VARIOUS CROPS WILL BE CONTROLLED AND PRICES MADE

WHEAT, CORN AND OATS

These are the leading grain crops of our country. They are the leading articles for speculation under the old system, which has been to a great extent responsible for the price secured by farmers. There has not been anything approaching a failure of the wheat crop for many years, but wheat has been the most unprofitable crop for farmers, until the crop of 1903, when the A. S. of E. taught farmers how to put the price up. Corn and oats have been affected by greater variations in yield, and consequently greater fluctations in price. In 1901 the crops of both were very short and prices very high. In fact, the corn crop of 1901 was the smallest the country raised in many years, yet, remarkable to relate, it sold for more money to the farmers than any other crop raised, except the crop of 1902, which was very large and had the the benefit of the high price established by the 1901 short crop. It may be set down as a rule (and there are few exceptions) that the shortest crops sell for the most money and the largest crops sell for the least money. Statistics bear out this assertion and we invite investigation.

It is clear, taking this correct analysis of the case, that the business of agriculture has been in a bad way. Think of a business where the millions of people engaged in it are constantly putting forth their greatest effort to increase production, when the fact exists that the greater the production the lower the price. In this stupendous effort farmers are putting forth, we might say, to commit industrial suicide, they are goaded on by the agricultural press, by government experiment stations, agricultural colleges and farmers' institutes. Has the world ever witnessed a spectacle like it in any other industry? Absolutely no. In every line of effort the producers give some attention to marketing of the result of their investment and labor. In some lines the expense incurred to market the product oftentimes exceeds the first cost to produce it. Not so in agriculture. Farmers work long hours at hard labor to produce all they can, then they have been in the habit of dumping it on the market without the least regard for their

co-laborers, who also produce crops, or for the market demand. They virtually turn their crops over to a set of unscrupulous people who manipulate them without the least regard to equity for the producer or consumer. We believe, however, that a change has already taken place. We believe enough farmers have been educated on the plan to control marketing and compel prices that a new era has begun, and that farmers will never go back to the old system again. This is the plan of the American Society of Equity.

With grain crops the plan to secure profitable prices is very simple. In the first place we know that the world must have the grain. It is a matter of life or death with the people and domestic animals. If farmers in this country would not market anything for a week the world would be taught such a lesson as they never learned before. If they would withhold marketing for a month they could forces prices to any height they pleased. Thus, we realize the power farmers can exert.

But it is not a high price farmers want, but a fair price always. To secure a profitable price for any grain crop all that is necessary is to know the minimum price at your market town. When your dealer will pay it, let him have all he buy. When he won't pay it, stop marketing. In this way marketing will extend over a period of twelve months and when the year is around your crops will be sold at your price. Don't fear a surplus. The world has not had a real surplus in many years. Population and consumption are now increasing faster than production, and farmers need not fear for over production. Also, don't think that enough will not hold their crops. We believe it will be more difficult to get farmers to sell at the minimum price than to hold to make the price. All farmers don't need to hold. In fact, only a small percentage of them need to change their customary plan of marketing to prevent the temporary surplus, or early surplus that appeared under the old plan, and which was used as a club to beat the price of all down.

Granaries on the farm are very necessary in this new system. We advise farmers to provide good granaries in advance of their need, and they will be the best investment they ever made. One result of controlled marketing by farmers will be to kill speculation in farm products. Just think of the speculators selling out the farmers' crops months before they are produced. This has been going on ever since boards of trade have been in existence, and will not stop until farmers keep the supply back on the farms until the demand is ready for it. The rule should be: Hold all if the price is not right. If you can not hold all,

hold what you can. If you can not hold any, sell it. Each person who holds makes a better market for those who can not hold. As soon as a fair portion of any crop is held the price will be realized.

COTTON

This crop, like wheat and corn, is not classed as perishable, hence, is as easy to control in marketing as are the staple grain crops. Cotton is really the most easily controlled, as no granary or warehouse is needed. The bales may be stored in the open, with covering to protect from the weather. This crop is one of the chief speculative commodities of our country, and frequently great injustice is done to both producers and consumers, as well as to legitimate business through gambling in cotton. Notably was this the case in 1903, '04, when the crop was probably sold ten times over and prices ranged from 10 cents to 17 cents a pound. This is gambling pure and simple, and it is astonishing how any government will tolerate and perpetuate it. It is a blot that must be obliterated by the farmers themselves. The remedy is in controlled marketing. Let those hold who can hold and this will make a better market for those who can not hold. If the marketing of a crop is extended over a year there is absolutely no doubt of the ability of growers to compel a fair and profitable price always. We advise farmers in the cotton belt to grow diversified crops. Don't grow all cotton and buy necessary supplies for your family, animals and farm. Remember, by the plan of the A. S. of E. the larger the crop the lower the price. If, with a ten-million bale crop, a 12-cent price can be obtained, why go to the extra expense and effort to raise a thirteen-million bale crop and sell it at 6 or 7 cents? The value will be less in the latter case. Cotton in the bale, grain in the granary, and fruit and produce in a warehouse, are good assets and the owner can always borrow money on them if it is desired. You should always, however, strive to keep within your own resources. If pressed for money, sell part of the crop if the market is not up to your price and hold the balance. It may take a couple of years to get the plan to working perfectly. It will be remakable if it does not.

In this connection we reproduce the appeal to cotton growers as printed January 15th Up-to-Date Farming. It is designed to meet the exigencies of a very peculiar condition in cotton that was brought on by a government report of a very large crop, which resulted in a drop of 3 cents a pound in a few days.

HOW FARMERS OF THE SOUTH MAY SOLVE THE COTTON PRICE PROBLEM

THE SOCIETY THAT SECURED PROFITABLE PRICES FOR GRAIN IN THE NORTH PROMISES RELIEF.

J. A. Everitt, Indianapolis, Ind., Founder of the American Sociey of Equity, and its President, Gives Advice as Follows.

AN APPEAL.

From Jan. 15th 1904, Up-to-Date Farming.

The American Society of Equity, a national farmers' society for every crop, with headquarters at Indianapolis, Ind., sends words of cheer to all planters.

Your present troubles, though great, are not beyond speedy solution. All that you need to do is to follow a simple, automatic plan which has been successful in raising the prices of other farm crops. It is the plan of the American Society of Equity, and will speedily put the price of cotton where it should be for a fair profit to the grower and equity to consumers.

This society, although only two years old, has demonstrated the irresistible power of the farmers to price their own products—what they have made, own and what others absolutely must have. In the two years of its existence the farmers of the North have won notable victories over combined and organized dealers, speculators and gamblers on boards of trade. Particularly was this the case with wheat, which had been the farmers' least profitable crop for many years. On the plan of the A. S. of E. the price of the 1903 crop was elevated from under 70c to over $1.00, and remained there. The speculators set the price of the 1904 crop at 80c, but the A. S. of E. set it at $1.20, and won before the harvests were over. This society went into the tobacco States when the prices were down to a starvation basis and in less than a year the price has been doubled. The A. S. of E. held a national convention of tobacco growers and set prices upon a basis that gives dignity and profit to the industry, and the tobacco trust, the most arrogant and soulless corporation in the country, is absolutely at the mercy of the growers who have the tobacco that the trust must have before it can do a dollar's worth of businesss.

All through the North farmers have realized higher prices on all crops, because of the A. S. of E., than they

ever did before, for crops of an equal size. We mention these things so the cotton growers may have confidence that their great problem will be solved quickly if they really want it solved.

The American Society of Equity is for every farm crop. Our claim is that through it every farm problem can be solved. Let us see how the cotton growers' problem will be worked out.

The first object of the society is to secure a profitable price for every farm crop. This will be accomplished through controlled marketing. The one thing farmers need to know is the minimum (or lowest) price, below which they should not sell anything. Then marketing is controlled. All don't need to hold, but when the price is not right, then all should hold who can.

The price of the 1904 crop of cotton was set by this society in October, at 12 cents a pound for middling cotton, on the basis of the New York market. The crop was also estimated to be 11,200,000 bales.

On the basis of 12 cents at New York this means 10 cents to 11 cents at interior points after allowing freight and a fair commission for handling. This is the way the farm price on all crops is calculated by the plan of the A. S. of E.

It is claimed that there was a surplus of cotton grown in 1904. I don't believe the recent reports are correct, but let us assume that they are correct, so much better for the growers. The time is past when great crops are great national calamities. The A. S. of E. teaches a different doctrine. It teaches farmers that they are entitled to a fair price for every crop, whether a small one or a bountiful one; that farmers are entitled to their wages just the same as other laborers, and more than this, it tells them how to get their wages. If the biggest report the government, ginners or speculators have sent out is correct, I heartily congratulate the farmers on their success. In the A. S. of E. the farmers farm for dollars and its plan insures them profitable prices for every crop. This should be the case, for as much cotton will be consumed at a fair price as at an unfairly low price. The fair price can be secured if the cotton grown will be kept out of the hands of speculators.

Is there a real surplus? If there is more cotton than can be consumed then no person would pay 1 cent a pound for the surplus part. Is this not true? But on the basis of a suposed surplus they are willing to pay 6 or 7 cents for it. Do they pay this to destroy it? No, they buy it to hold it. Will it help the farmers' price to let the surplus go into the warehouses? No, as long as there is a

large supply of cotton in warehouses it will be used as a club to beat the farmers' price down, whether of this crop or future crops. Therefore, be careful to not let the speculators get hold of your cotton at a low price. Far better, if there is a surplus, that the farmers hold it themselves. How will they?

Let us assume that the cotton crop is 13,200,000 bales. Twenty-five per cent. (one-fourth) of this is 3,300,000 bales. Deduct this and we have seventy-five per cent. (three-fourths) of the crop, equal to 10,000,000 bales. Now, who will deny that a 10,000,000 bale crop will sell for 10 cents a pound? Less than a year ago the price was 17 cents a pound in New York on the basis of a ten million bale crop.

It is proposed to make your maretable crop ten million bales, and offer this to the world at 10 cents a pound on the farm, or 12 cents in New York. But you ask, what will we do with the 3,300,000 bales? Let us see.

In the first place I don't believe there is this much surplus, but we will take the other people's word for it and we will find out who is correct in a way they never dreamed of. I will tell you the A. S. of E. plan in such cases as this.

Withdraw twenty-five per cent. of your cotton from the market. Set it aside and forget that you have it. If it is real surplus, as the buyers will have you believe, it is not worth anything. If you persist in dumping it on the reluctant demand it will bring you less than nothing. Let me prove this assertion.

You admit that a ten million bale crop is worth 10 cents a pound, while a thirteen million bale crop is worth 6 cents a pound; three bales at 10 cents will bring $150, but four bales at 6 cents will bring only $120. Don't you see that you pay a penalty of $30 for marketing that one bale? Who will be so foolish? If you have 4 bales, put 1 aside. If 8 bales, put 2 aside, etc. On the balance set your price of 10 cents on the farm, 12 cents in New York, and don't let a pound get away from you for less. On the balance, one-fourth, which appears to be worth less than nothing, set a price ONE CENT PER POUND HIGHER, and don't sell a pound of it at the rate set on the three-fourths. In this way it will be sure to not come in competition with the normal supply, and besides if the dear buyers get so hungry for cotton that they will pay 11 cents in the country and 13 cents in New York, you will know that the awful surplus did not exist. As three bales will bring you much more than four what good reason can there be for any body to reject this plan?

If you are in debt go and tell your creditor about this

plan and what you want to do. Tell him that the great American Society of Equity is coming to the relief of the cotton growers,and that cotton will sell at a better price than formerly in a very short time. Tell him that every cotton grower in America will get the same advice, which is a fact, and that enough will follow this sensible advice to compel the buyers to pay the price to get enough cotton.

Fellow-farmers, you grow stuff that is handled by the shrewdest classes of people in the world. I do not blame you for not being able to cope with them single-handled, but in this society that has never failed to give the results promised, you can always enter the game of marketing, knowing that you hold the winning cards.

The advice so freely given lately to reduce the acreage next season is bad or premature. I appeall to you to not attempt it now, but put out the usual crop. If there is a surplus of 25 per cent. you can hold it over. If you reduce the acreage 25 per cent. and there comes a bad season, the crop will be very short, and there will be suffering among many million people in this and foreign countries. I think the best thing farmers can do when there is a large yield of any staple crop, is to hold part over against the short years that are sure to come. Take any series of several years and there has not been an actual surplus. All legitimate interests must approve of the plan to hold surpluses, if any, on the farms, thus insuring a uniformity of supplies and values that can not be realized by any other plan.

The American Society of Equity is ready to exercise its good offices to the cotton growers. The only question for them to decide is, will you accept the service? Do you want a profitable price for your cotton and will you do the very reasonable things required?

* * *

HOGS AND CATTLE

These products of the farm come in a different classification from non-perishable grains. When these crops are "finished" they should be marketed with reasonable promptness to save extra expense, yet they can be held a moderate length of time if necessary to maintain prices.

It is evident, considering the prices paid by the consumers, that every pound of pork and beef produced should brings the producers a good price. The great profits on meat, however, now go to the middlemen.

As with grain the solution of this problem is in controlled marketing. The stockman should know the minimum price and refuse to sell for less. This can be done with a strong organization among producers. There is, however,

a factor entering into it that may compel stock yards in leading cities. The buying and distributing end is now so thoroughly under control of a few men that controlled marketing on the farm may not meet the needs entirely. Even though a supply of fat hogs and cattle was sent to market to only equal the demand, if the buyers would refuse to pay a good price or buy at all, as they frequently do, the feeding charges are so high that the shippers can not afford to keep them long in the present stock yards. Therefore it may be necessary for stockmen or shippers to have their own stock yards, where cattle and hogs may be kept indefinitely and the expense be only the market price of feed used and the legitimate cost of attendance, while the stock will be putting on additional fat. In this way buyers would be forced to deal equitably with the shippers. A fraction of a cent a pound on pork and beef would soon produce a fund that would provide independent stock yards in all leading markets.

BUTTER, EGGS AND POULTRY

Probably in no farm crops are manipulations carried on to a greater extent than in eggs and poultry. Butter is a commodity of more uniform production, besides in recent years butter producers have combined to a large extent, insuring more uniformity of prices. Elgin, Ill., is the recognized centre of butter production of the country and practically makes grades and prices for the country. We might compare Elgin in its relation to the butter industry to what Indianapolis will be when the American Society of Equity is fully developed, to the entire agricultural business—the clearing house. Buyers go to Elgin to buy instead of the butter going out over the country to take chances with buyers. Also, butter produced elsewhere takes its value largely from the Elgin product.

Dairymen can, however, realize great benefits through national organization, particularly those who supply milk to city markets. This industry, like all others, is being organized and we now have in all the leading cities a milk trust or company whose policy is to squeeze the producer down to the lowest point and charge the consumer the highest price he can be made to pay. Organized producers can make these trusts harmless at both ends.

Eggs are chiefly produced in the summer, and at that time bring the producers 8 to 12 cents a dozen. As farmers have no facilities for storing them they are bought up by the food trusts and companies or individuals, who put them in cold storage until between seasons, when they are brought out at 30 cents to 50 cents a dozen. The system is

bad in all respects. In the first place farmers are not encouraged to produce at the price they get and in the second place the price is so high much of the year as to curtail consumption. Give a uniformly profitable price to the producers the year around and a uniformly equitable price to consumers the year around and the production and consumption of eggs would increase greatly.

These things can be accomplished through the A. S. of E. When farmers are organized they will have their own cold storage plant, belonging to one or several local unions. One-half or any portion of the eggs can be stored for the producers' account. The others go on the market in the summer time at 20 to 25 cents a dozen, and the stored ones come out in the winter at slightly higher prices. This is a simple plan. It is entirely practicable and will be welcomed by all but those few individuals who are making mountains of profit under the old, bad system. Exactly the same illustration can be applied to poultry and some other perishable crops.

ORCHARD CROPS, APPLES

Every person who grows fruit would like to have a greater degree of certainty prevail in their prices. The leading orchard crop is apples. When there is a good crop of apples they usually sell at from 20 cents to 30 cents a bushel in the orchards. If the grower attempts to ship them to market he frequetly finds himself even worse off if his shipment happens to strike a glutted market, or a dishonest handler. This is a crop in which cold storage again figures, and the trusts, companies, or individuals, who have the facilities to hold the crop, makes several times as much as the producers. When orchardists are organized it will be an easy and simple matter to store and hold their own fruit, in their own warehouses—control marketing— and make a fair price to both producers and consumers. If consumers could buy apples at a moderate price, such as would be fair to them, give a profitable price to the grower and only a legitimate profit to the handler, the consumption would be double.

PEACHES, STRAWBERRIES, ETC.

These fruits differ from apples in the respect that the entire crop must be marketed as it matures. To maintain an equitable price a different plan must be followed than with the former. If the crops are large and they are thrown on the market indiscriminately, the markets are bound to be glutted and serious loss results. A market that will take 10,000 baskets of peaches a day and pay a good price for

them would be glutted with 15,000 baskets, and all would sell at a loss. It is necessary in such crops to know the requirements of each market, to be in communication with all producing sections, and to direct the supply so as to equal the demand and prevent over supply. If there are very large crops it will be necessary to keep some at home and let it spoil rather than to send it to a distant market, where it is not wanted.

These crops are the most delicate to handle for certainty of profitable prices. But it can be done through organization. With a head or clearing house where the crops are reported; with agents or representatives on all leading markets; and the means of communication with the producers as the A. S. of E. provides, results will be as satisfactory and reliable as with non-perishable products. It may be necessary to have a farmers' national telegraph or telephone system to carry this branch of the work out to its perfect end. If this is found necessary the farmers can easily build it when getting profitable prices. A slight advance on the farmers,' stockmen's and fruitmen's crops will amount to hundreds of millions of dollars and supply all the money necessary. Or a small assessment on members of the society when numbering a million or more will supply funds for any improvement that may be deemed wise or necessary.

Fruit-growers, gardeners and truckers should have representatives in all the leading markets. To afford them, local unions of the A. S of E., whose members produce such perishable crops, should assess the members to maintain such agents or representatives. To accomplish this end it is advised that frouit-growers organize under the distinctive name of The Fruit-Growers' Branch of the A. S. of E. Members who want the advantage of the special service can then contribute to this special branch. The same illustration will apply to truckers, and has been adopted by the tobacco and bean growers.

CROPS FOR CANNING AND SUGAR BEETS FOR FACTORIES

There many sections of the country where extensive canneries and factories are operated that take the products of thousands of acres.

The present plan is for the canners and manufacturers to name a price to the farmers for the crops delivered. The price is oftentimes made very low besides all the risk of crop failure comes on growers. By the plan of the A. S. of E. the farmers will dictate the price and protect themselves first. These crops must be largely under the control of local unions, but through the national union and national organization, a uniformity of price will be maintained

throughout the country that will give the canners and manufactures a uniform cost price, so they in turn will be on an equality when it comes to selling to jobbers.

If the farmers in any community where this business is carried on were organized in the A. S. of E., they could agree on prices they would charge, and the contractors would be obliged to pay them. Sweet corn, peas, cucumbers, beans, beets, etc., must be obtained in the vicinity of the factories. Hence, it can be seen that a limited section organized could control the situation. It is evident that factories can not conveniently move out out of a locality and they can not bring their stuff a long distance. Growers for these concerns can quickly secure all the benefits of co-operation and price making.

TOBACCO

The tobacco industry was probably in the worst condition of any branch of American agriculture when the American Society of Equity went to their relief. The tobacco trust absolutely dominated both the producing and distributing ends. It dictated to the grower the price it would pay, and the grower had no alternative but accept, although the price was almost on a starvation basis. It also has the distributing end almost as tightly in its grasp. Jobbers are allowed only a small percent for handling their product, with an additional small percent if sales amount to a certain large sum in a stated length of time.

Hundreds of calls came to headquarters of the A. S. of E. from the tobacco districts to "come and organize us." The National Society of the American Society of Equity has responded to the call and is now systematically working in the leading producing sections. As the bad condition of the industry has likewise affected business of all kinds in those sections, we enlist the merchants, bankers and manufacturers and professional men in the towns to organize with the farmers. It is clear that interests of the country districts and the towns within them, are mutual. Such towns can not prosper except the country is prosperous. Likewise the country surrounding can not prosper without the towns enjoy an equal degree of prosperity with them. Therefore, it is clear that the town people want the farmers to organize to put their business on a basis for certainty and uninterrupted prosperity, which will occur through the A S. of E. Tobacco-growers have been benefited enormously already by the A. S. of E. plan. The farmers want the help of the merchants because in this way will be brought to their unions that business training that farmers oftentimes lack. Besides, by making it a

joint movement better meeting places can be had in the towns than the country affords. Farmers need not fear that the merchants will control, because they (the farmers) will be more numerous.

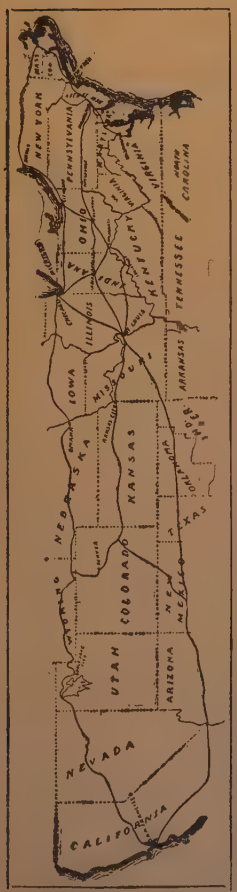
A national convention of tobacco growers was held at Lynchburg, Va., in November, 1904. At this convention the growers themselves agreed on what would be an equitable price for tobacco, which price, and all other minimum prices, are published in the official paper.

When the buyers find that they can not buy the tobacco at their own price, they will pay the growers' price. There need be no fear about this. While tobacco is not as necessary as bread to sustain life, yet it is the most essential luxury, and the people will have it regardless of the price the grower puts on it. Companies with a large capital stock will never be able to help growers permanently, and we advise farmers to have nothing to do with them. In a business of this kind and in every branch of agriculture, each grower must be responsible for his production as well as his price. Suppose a company was formed with many millions of dollars to give growers good prices for any crop, all the farmer needs to do is to grow all he possibly can and deliver it to his company. Soon there might be overproduction and the company might be unable to find a buyer at a higher price and the scheme would fail. This is exactly what occurred to Sully, the cotton king. It is easy enough to put the price high by bidding up and paying a high price. The inability to always find a buyer at a higher price makes the plan impractical. It was always so and always will be so. The only solution for the agricultural problem of profitable prices is in controlled marketing by the producer. By the plan of the American Society of Equity, each grower knows that if he overproduces prices will be set lower by the National Union.

POTATOES, VEGETABLES, ETC.

From the explanations already made how various crops will be handled, marketing controlled and prices made, the reader can readily apply the plan of the A. S. of E. to any other crop. It is simplicity itself. First, organization; then controlled marketing.

HOW TO CALCULATE THE FARM VALUE OF CROPS ON THE PLAN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY



The American Society of Equity is being built for every farm, garden and orchard crop. It is for the grain grower, the stock feeder, the dairyman, the poultryman, the tobacco grower, the fruit grower, the cotton grower, etc. As soon as it is in operation it will benefit the largest operator, no difference where situated, or in what line engaged, and also the smallest operator—owner of a few rods of ground—by securing stability and equity of price, which means stability of prosperity.

The central head or National Union of the society will print in the official paper a price that any crop is equitably (to producer and consumer) worth. This will be done as soon after the crop in this country is secured as it is possible to decide the yield from reports from members and local unions. The price will be known as the MINIMUM price, and will be based on some leading market. For instance, grain and stock prices will be based on Chicago, cotton on New York, beans on Detroit, etc. (The Pacific Coast and territory tributary can have their own bases and the plan will work the same for them.) Markets elsewhere and the farm price can be calculated from these bases, being enough less to equal transportation and the cost of handling. Of course, there will be many places where the local markets will take all the products, and the price under these conditions is usual-higher than where a surplus is produced. The home market should be cultivated to the greatest extent possible.

Refer to the map and let us see what the farmer in Central and Western Kansas ought to have for his wheat on the basis of $1.20 per bushel at Chicago. The rate of freight to Kansas City is 16 cents per cwt.; from Kansas City to Chicago is 14 cents; total, 30 cents per cwt., or 18 cents a bushel. Deduct this from $1.20 and we have $1.02. If the farmer in Central and Western Kansas receives less than $1.02 on the basis of $1.20 for No. 2 red at Chicago the difference is what the middlemen charge for handling it.

There is another thing farmers should notice. The railroads charge 16 cents to carry wheat 200 miles west of Kansas City, but only 14 cents for the 500 miles from Kansas City to Chicago, or as 8 to 3. This looks like an injustice that should be wiped out. Also, the through export rate from Kansas City to Great Britain and other foreign ports ranges from 29 cents to 33 cents, only twice as much as is charged to carry grain less than across one State. There is no equity in such an adjustment and it is clear such inequalities can only exist because farmers have not put themselves in a position to resist them. They can quickly change these things when organized.

Referring again to the map, the rate of freight from Chicago to New York is 20 cents; therefore, wheat that is worth $1.02 in Kansas ,$1.20 in Chicago, is worth $1.32 in New York, plus a fair price for handling it. This should be the case if equity prevails, as the populous east must get its supply from the grain fields of the west. The distance by rail from Chicago to New York is 913 miles, the freight rate 20 cents per cwt. against 16 cents for 200 miles in Kansas, or as 1 to 4.

Eastern farm consumers of western grain and meat need not be concerned if the western farmers get good prices. This is not a movement for a good price on one product or a few, but on every product. The vegetables, fruit, dairy products, poultry, eggs, etc., of eastern farmers will advance proportionately.

The entire agricultural business needs reorganization in its distributing end. Gross discrimination must end. Equity must prevail and these things all depend upon the farmers. Elevators and shipping associations in the Mississippi Valley won't cure the trouble, but may aggravate it. Nothing less than a national organization when a million or more farmers will speak through an authoritative head will be effective. Under such conditions the farmers will rule—they will be irresistible.

NATIONAL CROP CONVENTIONS

HOW PRICES MAY BE INTELLIGENTLY MADE AND POSITIVELY MAINTAINED.

From Up-to-Date Farming, 1904.

The closing year has been prolific of important lessons. Price-making and marketing have been studied by the rural population as they never were before, and it has been proven that the producers of farm products can control the market and make and maintain prices. The remaining lesson to learn is the best way to do it. The American Society of Equity is not a stickler for methods. It set out to prove that the farmer need not trail along after all other classes, that he need not look from his toil-worn fields to see everybody else putting prices upon the work of his hands while he alone must toil on, aimlessly, almost hopelessly, and accept for his products whatever the buyer chose to offer. We have accomplished that purpose. We have proven that the farmer, though a toiler, is abreast of other toilers, that he possesses every right that belong to others, and that from the very nature of his products, food and raiment for the race, his is the vocation which makes all other vocations possible, and without which none of the others could be. We have demonstrated that, by a simple act of ordinary business, he can secure these rights which he has so long waived in the interest of others, and for himself make and secure profitable prices upon whatever he produces that may be needed by his fellows or their domestic dependents. It only remains, as we have said, to determine the best way to do this.

The methods adopted for other great purposes, and the successes achieved, point to a national convention—a convention of wheat growers, of corn raisers, of cotton planters, of tobacco raisers, of fruit growers, of live stock men—of every great agricultural interest. Assembled thus we may pattern after the political conventions, and act through committees. Not only supply, demand, market and price may be considered, but other questions affecting the industry may be discussed, making the convention an annual summing up of the lessons and experiences of the years, and of suggested advancements for the year to come.

Who can calculate the benefits that would result from such conventions, and who would be better qualified to make suitable prices upon the various products than such

a convention of the producers of them, acting primarily through a committee of the most intelligent, most conservative, and most judicious of them all? Such action ratified by the convention, would go to the country with a force, and be received with a confidence that no other action could claim, unless it were the action of the government itself, and it is questionable whether even that would carry with it so great a weight of confidence.

But would such action be accepted by the masses of the various lines of production? We may reason from analogy and say emphatically YES. And this is a good year in which to say so, because the proof is so near at hand.

The national conventions of the political parties but recently met. They adopted platforms that had never been considered for a moment by the masses, and in most instances named candidates that had not previously been spoken of. In only one case was the candidate a reasonable certainty, in another he had been mentioned and discussed, but he was followed to the convention by the fiercest opposition. In all the other cases the candidate was absolutely unknown and unthought of. Yet the wires had scarcely cooled from the flash that told the news when the respective party masses accepted the result as their own act—the platforms as being the embodiment of their most sacred principles and profoundest convictions, and the candidates as being the ones of all others whom they most delighted to honor. Can it be said that people so intelligent as those of America are less devoted to their personal interests than they are to their political parties, which, laud them as you may, are but ephemeral aggregations gathered around some fancied purposes, and whose principal if not only beneficiaries are the few that may obtain office? We do not believe it. Give the American people a chance to rally around the standard of their own prosperity—the foundation of their homes, the welfare of the families, the success of their calling—and they will do it with an enthusiasm and unanimity that will put every doubter to the blush and every enemy to flight.

What of a penalty? No penalty will be needed but the penalty of privileges abused, opportunities neglected, and willful loss. What incentive? The incentive of benefits, of just reward for toil, of an honorable place among men, of a home established and a family provided for—the incentive of honest and honorable prosperity. The voter that ignores his party action is a "bolter," the laborer that refuses to recognize the union is a "scab," the farmer that would not accept the work of a convention of his kind would

be—the future must coin the word. The lessons and successes of this year point to a full accomplishment of these great purposes next year.

MARKETING CONTROLLED AND UNCONTROLLED.

From Up-to-Date Farming.

The heading of a recent report of a Chicago hog market (in 1904) was like this:

PRICES 60 TO 70C LOWER THAN A WEEK AGO AND 7,000 GO OVER.

And the following statement tells the story:

Hogs received to-day	11,000
Hogs received yesterday	17,852
Total this week	118,154
Total last week	95,790

A later report of the Indianapolis market has this announcement in the heading:

"PRICES OFF FROM 5 TO 10 CENTS, RECEIPTS BEING LARGER THAN NEEDED."

"Receipts being larger than needed." Dumping on a glutted market. The hogs were all needed, but not just then, and the sellers had to pay the penalty for crowding them on an unwilling market.

This is uncontrolled marketing; marketing without any system; pushing the stock out and hurrying it to the city with no knowledge of the reception it is to meet when it gets there. There could be no more vivid picture of the effects of such a course than that given above, no more unanswerable argument. And the very same is true of the cattle market. There is not too much meat in the country. It will every pound be needed, but it is not needed at once; it can not be used at once, and when the producers push it in excessively, they must pay for their folly.

There is, however, an artificial element in this trade for which the growers are not responsible, and that is the monopolistic (or trust) control of the live stock market, the power of a few great packing firms that arbitrarily put prices on the stock without regard to whether the market is crowded or not, and then just as arbitrarily put a price on the finished product as it goes to the consumers' tables, without any regard as to whether the animals on foot cost much or little.

Mr. H. C. Harpster, of Millersburg, Ohio, notes this condi-

tion, and sends us an eloquent appeal to farmers to organize to resist this injustice that is robbing the people mercilessly on both sides of the market. But in this case what can be more eloquent than a bare statement of the facts? We believe that the familiar maxim of the courts that whatever is "contrary to good public policy" may be suppressed or prohibited, should come to the relief of the public in this important matter, and shrewdly created technicalities should not be permitted to intervene.

But what can the people do to prevent excessive shipments and market gluts? How can controlled marketing be applied to live stock? That question has been frequently discussed in these columns, and, we think, made plain. It is to have a price on the farm and stick to it. From the very nature of the product, though, this is more difficult in the matter of live stock than in that of the greater field crops. A living animal must eat; it can not be gathered and laid aside to await a market. When it is ready, when it is at its best, it is important to market it, and the owner is restless if he has to hold it longer, and justly so, for he is standing on the border line of profits and losses.

But even this problem, serious as it is, may be worked out by organization. Telegraphic and telephonic communication is now so perfect and so instant that the condition of every market may be known daily, not only by the shippers but by the feeders and sellers also. Upon the local shippers, however, must devolve, perhaps, the leading role in the solution of this problem—they must refuse to ship when the market is congested and the prices are breaking. Closely organized and acting in conjunction with the farmers, they could work the matter out with absolute certainty. The farmers united and with an equitable price in view, and refusing to sell below it, and the shippers united and with a constant eye upon the markets and refusing to ship on a glut, the markets may always be kept healthy, the price equitable and steady and the supply adequate.

May we once more appeal to farmers and shippers to take this matter up and work it out, not only in their own personal interest, but in the interest of all business and humanity? This paper is undoubtedly on the right track, and the American Society of Equity affords the unquestioned plan and a golden opportunity. If any reader can think of a better he will have our heartfelt thanks and win the gratitude of the public by suggesting it.

THE FARMER AND HIS POWERFUL FRIENDS NOW RATED AS ANTAGONISTS

From Up-to-Date Farming.

Not less than two billion dollars are invested in plants for the manufacture of cotton goods, besides the great sums invested in the manufacture of by-products of cotton, such as cotton seed oil, etc. Add to these sums the amounts invested in flouring mills and other machines for converting the grains (cereals) into thousands of different usable articles. Then the sums invested in the woolen mills and other great factories for the conversion of raw farm products into articles for use, as well as the, we presume, equally great investments in the manufacture of the machinery used in all these great enterprises.

These references open up a line of investments stupendous in the sum of money involved, in the number of people employed, and in the amount and importance of the work done. Every part and particle of these great investments depends for success, for existence, upon the work of the farmer and the products of the farm. Were these withheld by a failure of the soil to produce, or the refusal of the farmer to furnish them for a single year, each of these enterprises must cease to operate and go into bankruptcy, and a continuation of such failure or refusal would make all this valuable machinery worth no more than old iron at the junk shop.

And now must come in another long line of sufferers—those engaged in transportation, in providing fuel, in building cars, and in making the machinery that builds them. Also those engaged in the distribution of the finished products—wholesalers, jobbers, merchants.

What, then, should be the relation existing between the farmers and all this vast line of investments? That of the closest friendship certainly—the friendship of absolute dependence and mutual interest.

But an element coming between the two has for its own selfish interest inculcated a feeling of antagonism that is harmful to both interests. This midway element, by the most hellish means, has so long sought to rob the producer by forcing the price to him down, and then to rob the manufacturer by forcing the price to him up, that a feeling has been engendered in the breast of the manufacturer that to succeed he must get the producers' goods at the lowest pos-

sible price, and he feels that he must oppose every effort of the former to increase the reward for his labor.

In this the manufacturer is mistaken. His best interest lies in reasonable and STEADY prices—prices that enable him to make his own prices with safety, and to gauge his output with certainty. Thus is the farmer's movement to control the prices of his products as much in the interest of the consumer of those products as it is in his own, and should cement the friendship between them that would never have been broken but for the Godless greed that came between them. The producer of the raw material and the manufacturer that converts it into things of use are logical friends, and their friendship must be restored, and it will be by the controlled marketing proposed by the farmers, and the steady prices that must result therefrom.

CAPITALIZED CORPORATIONS NO RELIEF TO FARMERS

From Up-to-Date Farming, June 15, 1904.

Up-to-Date Farming stands in glad support of whatever may serve well the best interests of agriculture, and of labor in general; but the mere claims of an institution, and the interestingly detailed results which, it is argued, must follow it, are not sufficient to warrant its suport. Let everrything come under the keen scrutiny of investigation, and what can not stand the severest test of reason, may well be left alone.

A farm paper now lies before us which heralds the formation of what claims to be a giant corporation of farmers, with a capital stock of half a million, with the privilege of increasing it to five millions. This corporation is headed by prominent people, and it proposes to knock out the farm machinery trust in the first round. Should it do so, who would probably be the gainer? The new combination would have to crowd out the old one before it could get the field, to do which it must become stronger than its antagonist, and, therefore, just as much of a monopoly. It would be crowded with salaried officers managers and foremen, and perhaps be managed just as extravagantly and with just as little regard for the inner life and interests of agriculture. Human selfishness is much the same the world over, and only awaits the opportunity to manifest it-

self. But this is only a suppositional view of the probable, we may say, the natural result of the corporation should it be successful.

Another view of the enterprise is a far more impotant one. A capitalized corporation is nothing without money. Capital stock is not money; it is something issued by the corporation presumably to represent an investment—is given out in exchange for money. This particular corporation invites farmers to take its stock at $25 a share. The situation at present is this: The farmers have the money; the corporation has the stock. If the plans of the promoters be carried out, and they succeed in getting the stock taken by the farmers, the situation will be this: The corporation will have the money and the farmers will have the stock!

This is not saying the corporators are dishonest, or that they are inordinately selfish in their designs. They are men of business prominence. But this change of money and stock must take place before a wheel of the corporation can move; then the future of the money and stock must depend on the success or failure of the enterprise. Certain it is the money will never be swapped back for the stock, for it must be expended or absorbed before either success or failure can be reached.

We also have on our desk a circular outlining the formation of a corporation of tobacco growers and providing for a capital of $5,000,000. It, too, has the names of prominent men at its head, not one of whom, however, so far as we know, is a tobacco grower. The money is to come from the same source as that of the former one, from the farmers. In this case the tobacco growers are to put up the money, and the same change in possession, the same change in relation to money and stock, must take place as outlined in the case first recited.

Again we protest that we do not accuse these people of dishonesty, but their plan, if carried out, simply creates a rival to the tobacco trust, and involves the two in a fight to the finish. The new concern must take the money paid in by the tobacco growers as a fund with which to fight their antagonist on his own chosen ground. It is safe to conclude that the money would be thus absorbed, and the tobacco growers would be left where they began, minus some good money, plus a large amount of discouragement, and in the hands of a trust grown all the more arrogant because of its victory. "The man behind the gun" may be all right, we would not intimate that he is not; but it is the man in front of the gun, out in the field whence the money is to come, that is in danger. "We help farmers to

to help themselves," declare the promoters, but those same farmers are asked to "tote" the fuel—to furnish the money to buy their own tobacco, and to pay somebody a big price to show them how. They don't have to buy their own tobacco; it is theirs already. Why not simply hold it until some one else is ready to buy it at an equitable price?

This is the plan we advocate, and it takes not a cent of capital stock. Besides, if the tobacco growers were able to put up five million dollars they would not need anybody to "help the farmers to help themselves"—they could help themselves without help even from "the man behind the gun."

A letter just received from a very intelligent gentleman, writing from Kentucky, gives an account of the formation of a similar corporation among the growers of Burley tobaco in that State. It was capitalized, it seems, at $10,000,000. The tobacco growers were to furnish one-fourth of this, or $2,500,000, and then capitalists were to furnish the remaining three-fourths, and the corporation was to buy up all the Burley tobacco at 9 cents a pound, and after having been finally sold, net profits (profits after all expenses and salaries had been paid) were to be distributed as a dividend among the stockholders. Buying was to begin December 1. Nearly $2,000,000 were subsribed by the farmers, but fortunately none was paid in—it was not to be paid until the whole scheme was completed, which proves that its promoters were sincere and honest.

The farmers held their tobacco until the time came for the company to commence buying; but the entire amount required to be taken had not been subscribed, and the big loan could not be secured. The time was put off three or four weeks, the farmers still holding their tobacco. Christmas came. Still the loan had not been secured, and still the farmers kept their tobacco off the market, still awaiting the success of their own effort. Along in January things began to happen. The market had run dry. The factories had no material to work upon, and could get none. The growers did not have to wait any longer; the country was full of buyers, and the growers named their price—better prices than they had received for years. Why?

Not because they had formed a corporation, for the corporation had done nothing. Not because they had subscribed for capital stock, for they had not paid in a cent. It was because they had held their tobacco off the market until the market had to have it, and then they made their price, or could have done so had they been organized to that end. Their corporation absolutely failed, but they scored a notable success on this plan of controlled marketing, without know-

ing it.

And thus it goes. Great capital stock corporations never yet have brought relief to the farmers as a class. They must fight well drilled armies that are already in the field; that have their batteries planted and masked; their gunners trained and masters of their parts, and victory in this way can only come to the farmers at the end of a struggle which shall annihilate these intrenched veterans. It never comes.

The West is being thickly sown with these mush-room corporations, and there are indications that a crop is being prepared for the South. Much effort may be thus wasted, and perhaps some good money lost, but no permanent good will ever be accomplished.

Now, we are entirely willing for the American Society of Equity to be measured by the same standard with which we have gauged these stock corporations, and the same arguments may be used where they will apply. We are incorporated to make us amenable to, and to give us the protection of the law; we ask no subscription to capital stock, because we need none; we have to fight no corporation, because we are arrayed against none; we are rivaling no business concern, because we are not in business in the sense that they are; we are not asking farmers to furnish money to buy tobacco or any other farm product, because they already own it all. We simply teach them how to hold what we have until the market calls for it at an equitable price—a price which compares justly with the prices of what we have to buy, and carries with it a reasonable profit. We court investigation, invite comparison, and challenge a denial of the efficiency of the plan of the A. S. of E.

SHALL FARMERS FORM A UNION?

From Up-to-Date Farming.

The most frequent criticism we have of the attempt to organize the farmers for the object of making their own prices comes from people who are opposed to unions and trusts. They have seen and probably suffered from the iniquities of labor unions and of some trusts until they have come to the concusion that they are all bad, or that they are bad in principle.

"A good principle, not rightly understood,
May prove as hurtful as a bad."—Milton.

Or a good principle abused in its application may prove bad, and it is often so, as expereinced in the modern unions and trusts.

We have a letter from a subscriber who orders his paper stopped, because he is not in favor of a farmers' trust, but is in favor of ridding the country of all trusts.

Also, Mr. Leroy Templeton, of Indianapolis, a large farmer and stock raiser, recently spoke before the Farmers' Congress of Indiana. We never heard a man tell of more troubles in the same length of time, than affected his business, and he attributed them all to the trusts and unions. He said, in part: "I am opposed to a farmers' union. It is undemocratic, unfair and wholly selfish for the farmers to form a union to set the price on their crops." He further said: "I hate unions of all kinds, and it is not right for farmers to join a union."

From the Farm Journal we quote as follows: "We are in receipt of the following from an Indiana subscriber, 'Hit the trusts and monopolies a little harder; but let there be no farmers' trust.'" Replying, the Farm Journal says, in part:

"The trusts have been hit so hard lately that we feel like dropping the subject for a while. The larger proportion of them seem to have the stuffing nearly all knocked out of them. As for a farmers' trust, we see little sign of that rising above the horizon. It would be harder to manage by far than most other kinds of trusts, and, as has been proven, is so far an impossible task."

Referring to Mr. Templeton's claim that it is "undemocratic, unfair and wholly selfish for farmers to set the price on their products." Since somebody puts the price on these crops, why not the farmers? Does he think the farmers would not be as fair as the speculators, gamblers, middlemen, or food trusts? Since the farmer produces them and knows what they cost in investment, labor, loss of fertility, wear and tear of material, etc.; since he knows his needs in the way of living; what he should have for his family; for taxes and for profit; why should he not be the person above all others to price the produce of his own creation? If the farmer has no moral right to price his products who has? How can this right be morally claimed by a food trust, the speculators or middlemen? Will Mr. Templeton or any person answer?

The American Society of Equity is purely and simply a farmers' co-operative society. It is not a trust in any way, shape, form or intent. It proposes to organize the

farmers into a union where they can all get reliable information about crops, values, markets, etc. It will, through its board of directcors, decide what is fair and equitable price for each crop that is produced, basing the price on production and consumption. The price will also have a direct bearing on the COST of production. The society differs with the gentlemen who deny that the farmers have a moral right to price their goods. It most emphaticallly demands that right for the farmers above any other person, company, class, or trust.

The Farm Journal's statement that to form a farmers' trust has been proven to be impossible may be true, but if it refers to their right and ability to price their own products, it is mistaken, or at least the proof has not been submitted to us. We think there is proof quite to the contrary in the behavior of the markets every week.

Is it not a fact that when the farmers market hogs liberally, the price goes down, then when the receipts are small, the price goes up? It is the same with all other farm crops. The farmers do this, but as long as there is not a head to the whole business, and until all farmers have the same advice about the same crops at the same time, uncertainty will prevail. With a known price farmers will quit marketing the moment the buyer won't take any more. Then if the price goes down at the final market it is the shippers' loss. Do you begin to realize the simplicity of the plan and the absolute strength of the farmers' position? Every day we see proofs of how this plan would work out as accurately as the addition or multiplication tables when enough farmers are organized.

But to go back to a farmers' union: Let me ask those who oppose unions, or "hate unions," as Mr. Templeton said. Do you hate the union of the thirteen colonies that fought against oppression and through co-operation won freedom and independence? Do you hate the union of the States when they fought to preserve the union of the North and the South, and thus guaranteed the greatest and most glorious country the sun ever shone upon? Do you hate the union of the counties in any one of our States which co-operate to make up our great commonwealths? Do you hate the union of heaven and earth which co-operate to make the great universe? Do you hate the union of sunshine, air, rain and well-directed labor, that co-operate to produce the fine crops of grain, fruit and vegetables and the beautiful flowers? Do you hate the union of man and woman joined together by God to co-operate, so the race may not perish from the earth?

Do you really hate the union of capital that co-operates

to develop the wonderful resources of our great country, or of laborers who co-operated; and who have truly dignified all labor except that on the farm? Do you not realize that our universe, our nation, our States, our cities, our business, our very being, are all dependent on union and exist only through organization and cco-operation? The people who howl against unions in toto have shouted without due consideration. The trouble is not that we have unions, but that we have not enough of them. It would be simply preposterous to think of this country without them. They are the natural result of our wonderful development. It is the natural evolution from the savage state to one of the highest development—the passing from a state of guerilla warfare, political and industrial; to a federation of mutual interests, whether national or individual. More unions is what this country needs. When everything, everybody and every industry in the country is organized, unionized and co-operating; then we will have reached the millennium of our industrial, political and social existence. Then, when everybody and everything is organized, each will be as strong as the other. There will be no weak to be dominated by the strong. Then will the Third Power arise, equity will prevail throughout our land, and America will be the model to shape the destiny of all other nations.

Farmers, don't listen to the false techers. Others have organized. It was natural they should, and they will not disband their organizations. In fact, it is not wise that they should. It is your duty to organize. It is the mission of Up-to-Date Farming and the American Society of Equity to organize you, and unionize you, until you are as strong as the other classes, and so you can price your products as they do theirs. The union of the farmers will be the greatest union—greater than all others combined—a union that will temper all other unions and deprive them of their power to extort and injure.

Until the government lets the farmers fix the tax they shall pay; until the banker opens his vault and says to the borrower, "Help yourself and fix the rate of interest you will pay;" or the merchant opens his doors and says, "Take my goods and pay your price;" or the manufacturer says to the farmer, "Use the machine and set your own price;" or the laborer renders his service at the price fixed by the employer and complains not; or the client and patient set the price for the lawyer's and doctor's service; until then we will champion the farmer in his legal, moral, yes, Divine right to fix the price of his products—the result of his toil—the wage for his labor. "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

HOW CONCENTRATED WEALTH MAY RUIN AGRICULTURE

IMPERATIVE NECESSITY FOR ORGANIZATION.

From Up-to-Date Farming.

Mr. J. M. Doddridge, of Centerville, Ind., an interested reader of Up-to-Date Farming, and a keen observer of passing events, sends us the following from the Cincinnati Post, of October 12, 1904, and asks how the A. S. of E. would meet that condition and prevent the trusts from extending the same method of dealing to all farm products:

CHICAGO, October 12.—Evidence before the Interstate Commerce Commission today disclosed that Armour & Co. have complete control of the fruit-growing industry of the major portion of the United States. With the co-operation of the railroads, it compels commission merchants, fruit growers and all others engaged in the industry to pay a tribute of from $25 to $70 a car for the privilege of shipping fruit and vegetables to markets. The penalty of refusing is an embargo on all shipments and enforced retirement from business.

Edward Davies, Chicago assignee for the Yosemite Valley Fruit Company, furnished the Commissioners with evidence of discriminations against sections of the fruit-growing country and against individuals that compelled fruit growers in large districts to let their fruit rot on the ground, while exorbitant prices were charged for fruit in near-by cities.

The Armour Company hauls cars from Kansas City for 32 cents per mile, $10 for icing, and charges 43 cents a hundred for freight with icing charges of $45 a car from Tennessee and Illinois. All of Tennessee's products are barred from Chicago markets by a prohibitive icing charge of $10 a car, while Georgia points ship twice as much freight in a car with one-half the tariff rate and 25 per cent. less in icing charges.

It is not necessary to ice cars shipped from Michigan to Chicago, but the car trust controlled by Armour requires shippers to pay from $15 to $23 icing charges. In order to make the charge appear reasonable, the railroads delay the cars two days in transit. Mr. Davis refused to pay a charge of $45 for icing cars from Illinois points and Armour & Co. notified him to retire from business. He continued to receive shipments, but all railroads having contracts with Armour refused to accept shipments to his firm unless exorbitant charges were paid in advance.

In Michigan they stopped all his shipments. C. A. Bayers, of the Iowa Fruit Company, testified that his firm and other dealers were unable to get cars to ship consignments, while Armour sent agents to buy up the fruit in their territory and shipped them without icing charges to other agents in different parts of the country.

On a few Eastern lines the icing charges vary from $7.50 to $20 a car for longer hauls than those included in the testimony today.

One firm of local dealers owns 30 cars, but was not permitted

to use them on the Pere Marquette Line until they agreed to charge Armour rates. Chicago dealers have found that Armour & Co. control the egg and poultry markets by the same methods. They have sought relief by using boats, but in winter lake traffic closes and in the summer it is inadequate.

Witnesses testified that but for the prohibitive charges by Armour all Southern fruits and vegetables could be sold in Northern markets; that prices of fruit and similar produces would be reduced 50 per cent. in cities, and thousands of carloads of fruit that are now permitted to rot on the grounds in the country might be shipped to the cities and sold to consumers for one-third of the present prices dealers are forced to charge.

That the condition shown above is a serions one every thinking person in the United States, no matter whether farmer or artisan, laborer or professional man, rich or poor, must admit. The American Society of Equity teaches price-making and controlled marketing, and this is amply sufficient to secure equitable prices to producer and consumer. But transportation necessarily comes between these two classes, and under the present management of our transportation systems a few giant corporations, or trusts, could enrich one section and starve another. To hold such powers in check was the purpose of the inter-state commerce law, and in some cases, we may say in many cases, it has shown effectiveness, but in others it seems to have failed. The most dangerous powers are always the shrewdest, and most likely to find means of evading legal provision.

To the congress, the legislatures and the courts we must still look for relief from those threatening dangers, and their imminence simply emphasizes the necessity for compact, farm organization and loyal adherence thereto, that the farmers may speak in a united voice to the combined powers of greed, through our representative and judicial bodies to whom we look for protection.

It is well, perhaps, that the trusts are thus displaying their powers for evil, as nothing will more surely arouse the people, and whatever we may say or fear, the people are still supreme, and there will come a time when their supremacy will be asserted. Well it may be for us all if these great aggregations push not their powers too far.

SHALL FARMERS PAY SOMETHING TO MARKET THEIR CROPS?

Farmers are the only people in the country who produce

all they can, but don't spend a dollar to get a good market. Manufacturers often spend more to market their products than to produce them. Merchants appropriate a large percentage of their income to advertising to secure better and larger markets for their goods. Laborers join their unions and pay a considerable percentage of their wages into the union to secure a good market for what they have to sell—labor. And so it goes. Who, besides the farmer, having a commodity to sell is not willing to go to some trouble and spend some money to find a good market? Yet the farmers' goods are in the greatest demand—they are absolutely essential. If farmers would adopt the same plan as others do, they could put their prices just as high as they want to.

CAN PLANTING AND PRODUCTION BE CONTROLLED?

Under the old conditions, no. Under the new conditions, yes. In the past attempts have been made to regulate or limit the acreage of particular crops plauted. But the result was that many farmers quietly put out a larger acreage and often increased the acreage and yield. Under the new system when farmers are orgainzed into unions all over the land, if the order goes out to reduce the acreage 10 per cent., or 25 per cent., and the farmers agree to do so, the agreement will be carried out. What farmer would face his brother farmers in meetings who broke an obligation that was entered into for the good of all? The farmers wnen organized on the plan of the A. S. of E. can regulate their planting if it becomes necessary, otherwise they never will.

PRACTICAL ORGANIZATION

HOW THE FARMERS AND MERCHANTS OF OLMSTEAD COUNTY, MINN., HAVE JOINED HANDS IN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY.

W. C. Webber, Secretary Olmsted Co. Merchants' Association, Rochester, Minn.

Probably one of the most successful organizations of retail merchants in the country is the Olmsted County Mer-

chants' Association, which is simply a new name for a wider application of the benefits of what was originally the Rochester Merchants' Association, organized some two years ago in Rochester, Minn.

The plan or organization and operation of this association has been applied for and introduced into eighteen different states during the past six or eight months. Delegations from cities and towns hundreds of miles distant have visited Rochester for the purpose of becoming familiar with the manner of carrying on the work of this organization, which has certainly become famous among merchants' associations.

Its success is due largely to the fact that its members have not limited the scope of its usefulness, but have undertaken the solution of every problem that presented itself as bearing directly or indirectly upon the welfare of its immediate surroundings.

With its diversity of objects it has been able to keep alive the interest and enthusiasm of its members, which is so essential to the success of such a movement, and through lack of which so many organizations have become inoperative and inaffective.

Merchants in neighboring towns soon came to appreciate the value of such an organization, and, at their request, the association was enlarged to include all the merchants of the county and it now has a membership representing seventeen different towns in one of the best counties of the United States.

Soon after this association had become so decided a success, some of the representative farmers of the county conceived the idea of forming an association of the farmers along similar lines.

The fundamental principles of the American Society of Equity were communicated through the local newspapers by a practical farmer of the county, who also brought the matter to the attention of the secretary of the merchants' association.

Ever ready to assume the initiative, and believing the interests of the farmer and merchant to be identical, the merchants were not slow to take up the matter. Realizing the benefits that had accrued by reason of their own co-operation, they could not but realize that even greater benefits must result from this so much larger organization of the farmers. These merchants felt that any proposition tending to improve conditions upon the farm should have their first and best consideration. They believe the farmer to be, as it were, the barometer of trade and finance to which the merchant is bound to look before planning a season of

business operations. The needle of this barometer points to 100 when his crop is good and prices good. Then the farmer is practically digging abundance of wealth from the soil which naturally flows into the arteries of trade.

When the needle points to 75 that same stimulus to business, which characterizes the more favorable condition, is of course not in evidence. Repairs about the farm are not kept up as they should be, the farmer has less money to spend and is obliged to confine his purchases to the cheaper and inferior qualities.

To an even greater extent is business affected when the needle of the barometer stands at 50—where it stands today in many sections of the country. Look at the conditions that surround the home and circumstances of the average American farmer after two or three years of work without profit.

His harness, wagons and machinery are pretty well played out; he has been getting his groceries and other necessaries of life on credit; he is cautious about hiring help; inclined to do all he can with his own hands and take his chances on results; and finally obliged to set aside his inherent pride and solicit extensions of time from his creditors, who are the merchants of his county. Since these conditions are in evidence in this favored agricultural county, may we not suppose that they exist throughout the country.

Realizing, then, that something should be done to remove these elements of uncertainty from the circumstances of the farmer, to further their own intertests the merchants of Olmsted county, Minn., considered an organization of the farmers absolutely necessary.

They proceeded to study and discuss the plan of the American Society of Equity, and found it to be free from the various weaknesses that had charcterized former attempts to organize the agricultural interests of the country.

They found that it does not require the investment of any considerable sum of money for capitalization, but, on the other hand, seems to provide for a substantial organization, without capital stock, to secure co-operation of the farmers of the entire country, with a view of regulating prices of farm produce.

Believing the plan suggested to be a most practical one, and feeling that its operation must result in direct benefit to all classes of business, the merchants completed arrangements for a general convention of farmers and merchants to be held in Rochester on February 10th, last.

Hon. H. B. Sherman, a deputy organizer of the National Union, had been invited to address this convention and as-

sist in perfecting an organization. Over four hundred farmers responded to this first call and hardly one who was not impressed with the almost unlimited possibilities of the plan as explained by Mr. Sherman.

More than one hundred memberships were taken out before the meeting closed and Rochester Union No. 1, of the American Society of Equity had been organized and officers elected; and all this in a community that had never heard of the plan before.

And even more surprising is the interest and enthusiasm that is being displayed since the organization. New members are being enrolled very rapidly. Such an organization can not but exercise a tremendous influence for good in this community. The farmers feel that, in admitting the merchants to their organzation, they have secured an element of business ability and facilities for meetings that would not otherwise be obtainable. And the merchants appreciate the possibilities for furthering their own interests, in more ways than one, by co-operating with the farmers and lending their assistance and influence in bringing about improved conditions wherever it is possible.

Not alone will benefit be derived in the way of better prices for their produce, but the power and force of such an organization, judiciously exercised for the promotion of local improvements and the direction of local affairs, can bring about results that would not be possible in any other way.

No doubt other associations of retail merchants will be interested to know that the Olmsted County Merchants' Association feels that this organization of the farmers of this county is one of its greatest achievements. This may sound strange to some of those who have been inclined to discourage such movements among farmers, but let them try it along these lines and be convinced.

To antagnonize such a movement certainly means almost actual ruin to the mercantile interests of the community. Even though the outcome of results from such an organization be doubtful, it would seem to be good, sound business policy for the merchants to take hold and encourage the movement—especially since it involves so little expense.

EQUITY APPEALS TO ALL CLASSES

John P. Stelle, Associate Editor of Up-to-Date Farming.

We are aware that in our advocacy of equity the rights of

all must be not only respected, but they must be carefully guarded. In securing an equitable price for wheat, for instance, if that price be an advance on the prevailing one, the price of the bread of the consumer who is not a wheat grower, is likely to be increased also. Likewise, if we secure better prices for corn and hay, beef and pork, fruit and vegetables, the consumers of these articles who are not producers of them, are likely to have to pay more dearly for them. And if we increase the price of tobacco in the interest of the grower, the smoker and chewer must ultimately pay the increase.

In these facts superficial thinkers see an irrepressible conflict, and conclude that it is impossible to accomplish the first great purpose of the A. S. of E., the securing of equitable and profitable prices to the producers for all farm products. But in these same apparently conflicting interests we see the strength of our position, and the certainty of the accomplishment of our purpose.

Take the wheat grower and the cotton grower. The latter is a consumer of flour and not (as a rule) a producer of wheat, but he is one of the wheat grower's best customers. The wheat grower can not impair the cotton grower's ability to consume without injuring himself. Hence his interest lies in making the cotton grower able to consume the greatest possible amount of flour. How can he do that and at the same time hold his grain to a profitable price? Evidently by aiding the cotton grower to bring his product to a corresponding—an equitable—price.

But the wheat farmer is an abundant user of cotton goods. When the price of cotton goes up the price of cotton goods follows, and the wheat grower must pay more for his cotton fabrics, thus making his consumption of cotton goods more expensive, perhaps limiting his use of them, and thus cutting down the demand for such goods, and reacting upon the cotton grower himself. How can the latter avoid this impairment of his market? By standing in with the wheat grower in the latter's demand for better prices for his grain.

Here comes in a mutual interest and equity, which the unthinking world has failed to see. The cotton grower is not concerned about a higher price for flour if he can have a correspondingly higher price for cotton; and the wheat grower is not concerned about a higher price for prints and other cotton fabrics if he can have an equitable price for wheat. Self interest, therefore, the strongest power to influence human action, binds the two together, and impels them to join each other in a mutual demand for equitable prices for the products of each—a demand so powerful when

combined that the world can not turn a deaf ear to it

"But is not this a mere swapping of dollars so far as the wheat and cotton growers are concerned?" Perhaps so as to the amount of their own consumption of each other's products; but the prosperity of each depends upon the value of his surplus, and, while the price of that which is consumed by each is increased the price of each one's surplus is likewise increased, and its aggregate value is made greater. These farmers do not depend so much upon each other for their gains as upon those who produce neither wheat nor cotton, and the profits derived from these make up the sum of their prosperity.

This brings to view another class who consume both wheat and cotton products but produce neither—the great body of wage laborers. Can the demands for equitable prices be reconciled with the best interests of this great class so deserving of the kindly consideration of society, and can they be marshalled under the same banner, and held together by the same ties of self-interest? Certainly.

Nearly all classes of wage earners are already united in compact unions that give them greater or less power to enforce their demands for remunerative pay. The greater the ability of the wage earners to eat abundantly of healthful food direct from the farms, and to gratify their desires and tastes for an abundance of comfortable and even fashionable clothing, the better patrons are they of the producers of the material of which these things are made. This brings into lively exercise the self-interest of the wheat grower and the stock raiser, the cotton planter and the wool producer, the poultryman and the fruit raiser. Would not the labor unions feel that they have powerful allies in the enforcement of their demands could they so rate these great productive interests? Thus organized that is exactly what they would be, allies of the wage earners; self-interest would make them so.

But the matter of greatest interest to the wage earners, and that which opens up to them the best opportunities for savings, without resistance to or controversy with their employers, and without any disturbance of the industrial progress of society, or loss of time on their own part, is a reduction of the cost of living so that they could eat more and wear more, and yet save more, on the same wage.

Nearly all the supplies of the wage earners are in the merciless grasp of monopoly. The price paid the producer does not measure the price charged the consumer at the point of final distribution. Between the consumer and producer the princely profits of monopoly are annually growing into millions. Here is where the sweat of the farmer toiler

and the sweat of the wage laborer mingle and flow in a sea of unearned wealth for the benefit of neither, but to oppress both. The producer and consumer, brought thus together in equity, stops this fatal drain of life energy, and, dividing the cruel stream where it now pours its constantly augmenting tide into monopoly's coffers, sends one branch of it to increase to an equitable price the reward of the producer, while the other goes to diminish to an equitable charge the price taken from the wage earning consumer, thus knitting these great industrial classes together in the ties of self-interest and benefits, stronger than those of secret pledge or mystic ceremony.

We are not unmindful of the interests of the smaller producers, of the growers of the minor crops, whose rights are just as sacred, and who are just as much entitled to, and must have, equity, and whose every interest may be even more easily reconciled to and worked out by this common plan, but we have purposely made use of the three great classes of production and consumption, and we have brought out the apparently most irreconcilable phases of their relations to each other, to show, as we think we have done conclusively, that their interests are in harmony, and that beneath the Ægis of the American Society of Equity their true relation will be found, and a new era ushered in for industrial humanity.

HOW THE SOUTH HAS BLINDLY SUFFERED

From Up-to-Date Farming.

More than fifty years ago the British Board of Trade concluded that the lower they could force down the price of cotton the more the American planter would be compelled to raise to make a living, that the increased production would furnish increased supplies for their mills, and that it would afford additional leverage to be used in making the prices still lower. This policy was agreed upon, and has been adopted by all the Cotton Exchanges of the world, and it has been steadily and relentlessly pursued ever since, with various results, of course, as season conditions have favored or thwarted their purpose, but always in the loss of the planters, not in absolutely lower prices, perhaps, but in prices below what conditions warranted.

This selfish and cruel, and, we may say mistaken, policy,

has cost the cotton growers immense sums of money, or, rather, has prevented them from realizing vast sums they have honestly earned, and to which they were justly entitled. So great a difference has this made in the business of cotton growing that many good, industrious and economical people who ought now to be in independent circumstances, or, at least, well to do, find themselves and their families with a scant living, in many cases short of the common comforts of life.

Until very recently the results of this miserable policy have been accepted by the cotton planters as a decree of fate, as the best they could expect, and something entirely beyond their control. But a different teaching has lately found its way into the South, and there has been a wonderful awakening, a revolution in sentiment, and an absolutely different system of marketing. The farmer has learned his power, and he now knows that, as the first owner of the things he produces, he is the logical price-maker, and that no one can get them from him without his consent. He will no longer suffer the wrongs to which he has so long patiently submitted. Instead of the cotton crop of the present year going blindly on to the market as heretofore, it is going into storage rooms, there to remain until the demand calls for it at prices that mean reasonable profits to the grower, but, in no sense, excessive to the mill. Indeed, as we have argued so many times, and, we think, conclusively, the mills may get their supplies cheaper than under former methods, for the prices will be steady, free from corners and manipulation, and they will come direct from first hands instead of from the hellish pits of speculation. Two simple words have brought about this great change in sentiment and marketing—organization and co-operation, and it is not at all out of place to say that Up-to-Date Farming set that wave of thought in motion, and the American Society of Equity crystallized it into action.

THE UNION LABEL

One of the strongest weapons of organized labor is the union label. The organized workers have forced its use on almost every article produced by them to distinguish it from what they call "scab" produced articles, so that their friends may not be deceived into patronizing those unfriendly to organization.

Farmers have organized heretofore, but it has been in a desultory way, and no attempt has ever been made to use a label. Indeed, they have acted as though they felt themselves underlings, subject in their productions to the whims and speculations and peculations of others, with no right on their part to claim distinction for what they grew, or to exercise any control over its quality or price.

But things are becoming different. Lessons are being learned and acted upon that were looked upon as almost treasonable two years ago. It is a fact that the farmers are coming to the front, and they are asserting their rights in a voice that is being heard from Maine to California, and from the wheat lands of the Northwest to the Carolinas.

Why not designate the product of union farmers by a label? The A. S of E. provides one. It is seen at the head of this article, and we are sure that even its design must be admired. The monogram of the society occupies the central position, around which appears the words, "The American Society of Equity." The band of fellowship encloses this in a protected field, bearing above the "National Union" and below "American Farmers," the "of" in the monogram completing the legend, "National Union of American Farmers." Then on arms stretched out as to take in the world appears the words "Union Label."

As the succes of the A. S of E. will solve the farm labor problem and make a demand for millions of laborers at the market price of wages it is very sure that products thus marked, whether wheat, oats, hay, cotton, corn, fruit, butter, eggs, or whatsoever, will attract the attention of union laborers in the cities, who are the leading consumers of our products, and receive their decided preference, creating a special demand for the products of union farmers. But this fact must also be borne in mind: This label must stand as a guarantee of honest goods. The package designated by it must be as it is represented to be, for the whole society stands, tentatively, at least, as its guardian. There is no question but the use of this label, with this proper and necessary restriction, would add very materially to the demand in the market, and to the price.

TO WHOM BE THE CREDIT?

THE RESULTS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE POWER THAT ACHIEVED THEM.

From Up-to-Date Farming.

"Credit for dollar wheat is not given unanimously to the national administration; one farm paper claims that it did it. Isn't there danger of an over-production of such modesty?"

We find the above paragraph in a prominent farm publication, one which is ably conducted, and one, too, which is usually not afraid to lead out in reform lines. It takes no act of the imagination to determine that Up-to-Date Farming is the paper referred to by our contemporary. We do not know that we ever made the claim alleged, but it has been made for us and we have not hesitated to speak of the part we have played in the matter. We concede such a claim seems extravagant, and to the mere looker on as preposterous, but in these days all classes seem willing to give even the devil his due. A brief review of the situation can not be harmful.

It is very evident that some influence is at work among the people that never was before; that something is affecting the markets as they were never affected before. In the face of the conceded large corn crop, commercial reports of the highest authority tell us that traders who have been in the habit for years of making large sales abroad to be shipped later, in advance of the purchase of the grain, relying upon their ability to purchase the grain at their price at time of shipment, are having to buy back their sales because they can not purchase the corn to ship, not because there is a lack of corn, but because the farmers refuse to sell at the price. Such a state of affairs was never known before.

It is also conceded that there is a large cotton crop, the latest government report putting the yield at more than twelve million bales; and yet the manipulators find it impossible to force the price down materially and hold it there. From a single report recently issued by a promi inent member of the New York Cotton Exchange, A. Norden & Co., we make the following extracts:

"South Carolina. Farmers holding extensively.

"Georgia. Atlanta—The farmers are holding their cotton to a greater degree than we ever remember. Macon—This market is completely blocked, everything being held for ten cents.

"Alabama. Montgomery—Planters are either holding their cotton at home or bringing it to the market centers

and storing it—probably selling about one-third or one-half. Troy—Marketing has been free up to about the first of the month. Since then after cotton commenced to decline below ten cents, there has been a general holding back, and receipts all through this section have been light. Thomasville—One-third of the amount ginned is being held by farmers.

"Texas, Houston—In all my experience of twenty-six years in spot cotton I have never seen such an indisposition to sell spot cotton."

And so on. Our private advices are still more general and more emphatic than the above. The same is true of corn, of wheat, of oats, of beans, of tobacco—of nearly all the leading market crops. It was seen and felt in the wheat market of 1903. In 1904 it appears, as we have said in all the prominent crops, to an extent that puzzles veteran traders, men who have been on 'Change all their business lives.

Is any one willing to say that this disposition to hold crops off the market until a satisfactory price is reached, is accidental, that it took hold upon the farmers without any reason for it, that it invaded the wheat and corn fields of the North, the cotton plantations of the South, the tobacco fields of Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, the bean fields of Michigan and New York, all purely by accident at the same time, and simultaneously demanding the same price for the same crops?

This state of things, this condition of the market, was never known before. It cannot be accidental—mere chance. There must be a cause for it. Similar crop conditions have prevailed before. Wheat light, corn abundant; cotton and potatoes large; tobacco, beans and hay moderate to large. These conditions are not anomalous. But that farmers are holding them for a specific price made by themselves, and getting it—this is the feature that is new, and that is puzzling the veteran traders. As we have said, there must be a cause for it, something at work that has not previously been exercised, some connection and understanding among the producing forces that has not before existed—some power behind it all that was never before exerted? Find this and you will find what led up to dollar wheat and has so affected other prices and demoralized the market manipulators. It is not a question of modesty; it is a question of fact, of history now—a question of importance to producers of all time and countries, because it shows what can be done, and demonstrates their power to secure prices that shall reward them for their toil.

In December, 1902, the American Society of Equity was

organized based on equity in all the business relations of life. Its first great object was declared to be "to obtain profitable prices for all products of the farm, garden and orchard." Up-to-Date Farming, which had previously advocated this new and strange doctrine, was made the official paper, and began a systematic campaign to build up the organization and secure the first object. It taught unequivocally that the way to do it was by controlled marketing, to unitedly fix a price and to hold the products until the price was paid—advocated the precise action that it is now acknowledged has been taken, to the discomfiture of old-time market prophets and confident price manipulators.

It is not necessary to say, in the face of such recent history, that this paper was compelled to fight the first battle single-handed and alone. Not another paper in all the country advocated it. On the contrary, many of them openly opposed it, others ridiculed it. The editor of one, more prominent than most of the others, confessed in a letter over his own signature, that, though he did not care to fight Mr. Everitt in the open, he would be glad to give him a thrust under the fifth rib. We speak thus not boastingly, but simply for the truth of history, and for the encouragement of those farmers whose superior intelligence and firmness have proven the truth and won the victory—a victory greater in its results and benefits than any won on the field of battle.

But to the proofs. In May, 1903, wheat was selling below 70 cents a bushel. The editor of this paper, who is also president of the American Society of Equity, believed the price too low as compared with the cost of production and the general level of values. He hastily gathered all available statistics, both of production and consumption, which convinced him that for the crop of 1903, $1.00 per bushel would be no more than an equitable price and that every bushel that sold below that price failed to bring the producer what was justly his. May 25, 1903, he issued his famous Dollar-wheat bulletin, setting forth those facts and urging farmers to hold their grain for that price. Members of the Society at once accepted the bulletin in good faith, and acted upon the advice. Many other farmers who had read this paper did the same. But the agricultural press uniformly ridiculed the idea and discouraged such action, many of them unscrupulously attacking the personality of the advocates of the doctrine. The trade manipulators and gamblers in wheat prices of course fought it by every means their accumulated wealth and recklessness of truth enabled them to bring to bear.

But Up-to-Date Farming unflinchingly stood in the breach,

and defended the right of the farmers to price their products, and urged the holding of the crops as the only means of accomplishing it. Shipments began to slacken, the "visible" was reduced, shorts commenced to cover, the price began to climb, and the dollar was reached months before the crop of 1904 was ready for the harvest.

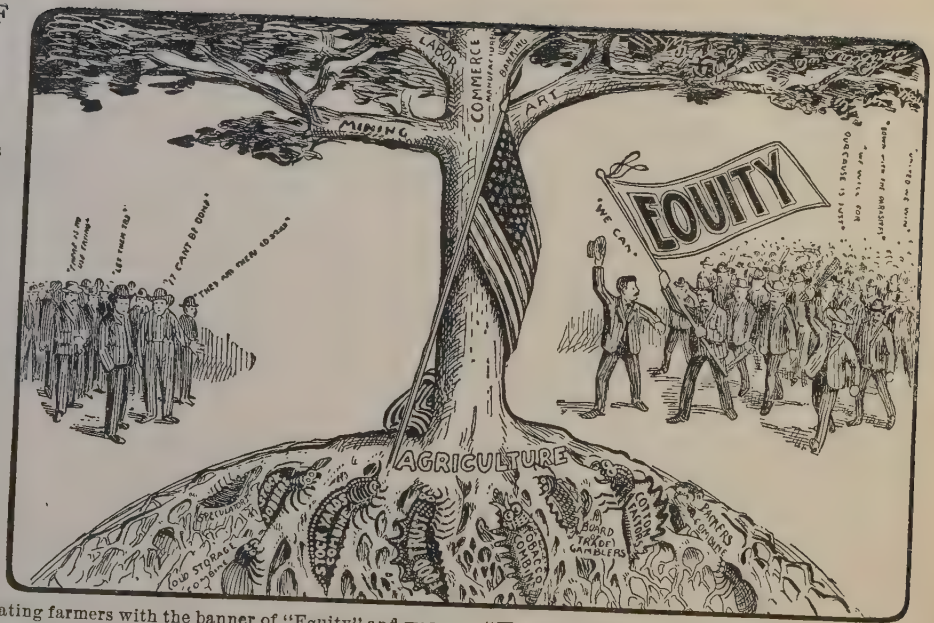
The history of the crop of 1904 is a repetition of that of 1903. Long before the crop began to mature, the country was flooded with reports of tremendous yields, and the speculators began to bid low prices for future delivery of the grain. Many sales and purchases were made below 80 cents. This paper and the society it represents bided its time. We had means of information the speculators knew not of, and were advised of the gigantic plans that were laid for a great rake off at the farmers' expense. July 20th was issued the bulletin of the society declaring the equitable price in Chicago for the 1904 crop to be $1.20 per bushel, and announced a total yield far below any estimate that up to that time had been made. Since then the estimate of the society has been vindicated by the very highest authority, and the price of wheat, in spite of all the efforts and influence to pull it down, has stood well up toward and at the $1.20 mark, and in the great milling centers it has gone beyond it.

We may well submit the cause to the decision of an intelligent and unbiased public. But, as we say in the heading to this article, the results are more important than the power that achieved them—important to a hard-working, poorly paid, but deserving class of people, who has long felt the injustice done them, but did not know tneir power to secure redress. Important to other producers, the growers of other crops, who have likewise born the burdens of an ungrateful world, but who now see clearly the way of relief.

And the greatest victory of all is in the fact that we no longer stand alone. The doctrine of controlled marketing has taken deep seat not only in the minds of the producing people, but it is being taken up by powerful molders of public opinion, and its potency is conceded by its most interested opponents. Let us reiterate our appeal to the growers of all crops—stand by your products and secure your price and just profits by controlled marketing, by holding your crops until the demand comes, and you will get your price.

THE TREE OF AMERICAN INDUSTRIES

Imagine a ponderous tree with great roots in the earth and immense branches high above. About it floats the Stars and Stripes of our country. Its many wide spreading branches represent our many industries, and its roots, American agriculture. Fasten to each life giving root a parasite sucking the life blood of the tree of American industries. On one side is a host of wavering people waving a purple banner with a pitiful lament "It can't be done." On the other side is the host of co-operating farmers with the banner of "Equity" and war cry "We can" marching on the brood of parasites. Thus will the tree of American industries, and American institutions, be saved.



THE TREE OF AMERICAN INDUSTRIES

C. Hayes Taylor in Up-to-Date Farming.

The farmer bears upon his back the burdens of the world, and it is upon his arm that our national welfare leans for support. The soil of our farms, watered by the sweat from farmers' brows, has nourished the Tree of American Industries until by its phenomenal growth, the wide spreading branches have overshadowed the world. And while the farmer toils and sweats below to cultivate the tree, vampires and parasites have nested in the branches, feeding on the choicest of its fruits, and dropping down only enough to allay the pangs of hunger to the workers beneath. These buzzards, hawks, crows and vultures are "the men up there who are doing the work." Our government has tried to clip their wings, but that has not diminished their voracious appetites. Something else must be done. Success on the farm can never be assured until these birds are routed. The way is before us. If we would assert ourselves and take our rightful place in the business world we must make us a ladder, every round of it built of an honest demand for equity, and we must add round after round to this ladder until it is as tall as the tree itself. Then we will climb step by step until we reach the top, and when we get up there—woe be unto those parasites!

The American Society of Equity will furnish us a foundation. Every one of its objects will make a round to the ladder that will bear us nearer to the top of the tree. It will go far towards making a connecting link between wealth and its creators. It will secure to us all opportunities to make our farms a grand success that present conditions make impossible.

Now, brother farmers, reason this matter out with cold facts. When you come to the inevitable conclusion that farmers must organize, warm up those facts in the fires of self-interest until they glow a white heat, and set yourself about the task of burning their brand into the brain of every farmer you meet. Here are the facts:

The buyers have organized and they won. The coal interests organized and won. The railroads organized and won. The manufacturers organized and won. The steel men organized to steal more, and they won. The meat men, the produce men, the lumber men, in fact most all the men have organized and won. Won what? Success! Everyone

of these men, all of these combinations, are dependent on some other people, and yet they won. Who are they dependent on? On the farmer—on you. Without you they can not exist. You are the first cause; they are the last effect. Suppose *you* organize and control your own industry. Then you become the rulers of the world.

Do you say, "I don't believe farmers can organize?" That unfounded belief, my dear sir, is the only stumbling block in the way of our complete success. I say unfounded belief, and I speak from conviction. What reason can you give for that belief that is not contradicted by truth, necessity and experience? The spirit of the times demands that we place our faith in ourselves. No one will refute the statement that if farmers would co-operate, they *could* place agriculture on a basis that could not be undermined, and would make farming a successful, certain and delightful business instead of a life of drudgery. Then, if that be true, the man who hangs back for fear that farmers will not pull together, is the *only* enemy to our organization that can cause its failure.

Consider the matter carefully, rationally. Every farmer wants success. He is willing to work for it. He is a man of sound sense and honest purpose, and I have faith enough in his intelligence and justice to believe that he can and will make use of all fair means to further his own interests. He will work for better crops and he will establish equitable prices as soon as he sees his way.

Our work, then, is one of education. Let us make our organization a common topic of conversation, the same as we do our crops and field work, until we fully understand its benefits. Let us take fresh courage in our strength. This nation and its government was founded under circumstances far less promising than was the American Society of Equity. Show as much interest in your society as you do in your political party. Give it the same loyal support and allegiance as you have to that, and you will have secured to yourselves and your posterity the blessings of a home in a land where men live and labor under the banner of "Equity for all."

BOARDS OF TRADE ARE THE DEVIL'S WORK SHOPS

Henry B. Geer in Up-to-Date Farming.

Labor—all labor—has the God-given right to protect itself. Whether it is labor of the factory, the mine, the counting room, the printing office, or labor on the farm, the same inalienable right exists. The factor in creating, in remodeling, in making wholesome for the human body, in making beautiful for the eye or pleasant to the taste, is the fundamental factor, and the mere fact of its primary position in the order of life should make it first in line of protection, and the division of returns from successful results. This is the natural viewpoint of all well-meaning, honest, and equitable men. But there is an element in the commercial life of the world—a barnacle rather, that has engrafted itself on the produce of the earth—a sapsucking, unholy, godless thing, that is holding up and gorging itself on labor's portion. This thing is the soulless, non-producing, conscienceless speculator or gambler in farm products. It is ill-gotten gains turned loose to the detriment of the producer. It is the wealth of the inequitable thing manipulated to throttle equity. Boards of trade as now run are the devil's work shop engaged in forging profits for the non-producing class from the results of honest labor. It is the greatest blight in the body economic—a danger that threatens the very life of the farming industries of America. It is a bold, fearless, devilish power that often defies the laws of the municipality and the State. It has no base in justice and honor, and exists simply because of the indifference and former neglect, of the one power that can dethrone it—the grand, majestic, sweeping strength of co-operative production—of organized farm interests and farm labor. Its injustice has grown because justice has been blinded; its inequity has been tolerated because there were none who raised the cry for equity; because the individual farmer was impotent in his feeble strength.

This is the condition that has obtained under inaction, the natural result of indifference and neglect on the part of the producers. It is fattening of the unworthy, while the deserving ones, those who have all along been putting forth their strength, laboring honestly and continually on the farm, have grown lean in purse and crib. It is illustrative of the old proverb of "saving at the spiggott and wasting at the bunghole." The farmer has labored diligently

and honestly, and in doing so, he was conscious of the his strength in manual labor, the work shop of his brain became dusty and cobwebbed, in so far as the proper guarding and distribution of the fruits of his labor are concerned. He has all along been short-sighted in the matter of marketing his produce. He has plowed, sowed and reaped; and then dumped the fruits of his labor into the lap of the conscienceless speculator, who has not hesitated to manipulate the market to his own selfish ends, after allowing the farmer an inequitable portion. And thus has come about the hold up of labor's portion. In this way has inequity all along prevailed, until now, after a realization of the unfavorable conditions, an awakening on the part of the producers that is becoming general—co-operation and organization—is beginning to obtain, where it should have been in existence years and years ago. A demand is now being made by the farmers for a release of labor's portion, and an equitable distribution of the rewards of honest industry and thrift.

This is the purpose of the American Society of Equity. It has for its chief object the betterment of the producing class; the advancement of the farmer's interests in every legitimate manner; and this without making war on any honest enterprise in any other field.

No purpose, however, can be accomplished without the hearty co-operation and support of those most vitally interested, a fact that makes it incumbent on the farmers to adopt active measures to strengthen themselves, to organize and co-operate in the marketing and distribution of the products of their farms.

The question, the agitation and the demand for equitable prices is now a vital issue—one on which the farmers everywhere can, and must, unite to their mutual benefit. The issue is sharply defined, and the fight is now on. Labor's portion in the returns for the produce of American soil is now at stake. A long pull and a strong pull is now being made to rescue the farmers' crops from the grip of the gamblers, and it needs only united effort to succeed. Let labor hold back her portion for once; let the men who grow the crops store them at home as largely as possible, thus letting the market manipulators waste away for the want of subsistence, and the victory will be won. No one has either the moral or the legal right to put a price on the produce of the farm, but those who grow it, and for this principle every American farmer should hold out till the last ditch.

The producers can win. They are sure to win in the long run, for they have equity on their side, and they have the crops on the farm where they were grown. The thing

to do is to make the storage at home as great as possible, and the offerings as meagre as financial conditions will permit; and then it will only be a question of a short time until the dealers will come to the producers and gladly pay the price the latter shall have put on the product of their labor. And then it will come to pass, that labor's portion will be delivered to the hands that wrought it, and not be held up by intermediate parties who have no legal claim to it, morally or commercially.

YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY

BECAUSE it is the only society for farmers that has a practical plan, and inducements strong enough to hold members. The inducements are financial profits.

BECAUSE farmers must co-operate to raise their business to a level with others. They never can do it individually, and no other class will it do for them.

BECAUSE you are now working for other people at wages set by them. (You get your wages through the price of your crops.) The A. S of E. will allow you to make your own prices and wages.

BECAUSE this is the only plan that will enable you to set your own price and get it.

BECAUSE you are absolutely not required to do anything that is not agreeable, profitable and to your interest to do.

BECAUSE it is not necessary to go to any meetings or lodge if you have not the time or inclination.

BECAUSE you can be a member and co-operate with other members, no matter where you live, if reached by the U. S. mail.

BECAUSE it is not a secret society.

BECAUSE it antagonizes no people, class or legitimate business, and every person, no difference what his or her business or condition, will be benefited.

BECAUSE it never fails to benefit every member from a few dollars to hundreds of dollars every year.

BECAUSE it has made hundreds of millions of dollars for farmers already in increased and maintained prices and in advice to farmers when to market.

BECAUSE it is non-political, and because it has the strongest safe-guards to keep it out of politics.

BECAUSE there is no capital stock to buy and no intricate machinery.

BECAUSE every member gets advice from headquarters, and all get the same advice at the same time.

BECAUSE this one society is for all farmers, and one society for all crops.

BECAUSE its crop estimates are the most reliable, and it has never made a mistake in its recommendation of prices.

BECAUSE it will insure you a profitable price on every crop whether large or small.

BECAUSE through its workings you will increase your crops and enlarge your markets, as well as increase your price and profits.

BECAUSE it will insure a steady flow of crops to market over the whole year, instead of a flood at one time and a dearth at another.

BECAUSE it wil kill speculation in farm products.

BECAUSE it will double the value of your farm and decrease the drudgery of farming.

BECAUSE it will solve all the difficult farm problems that have bothered farmers for years, and which are getting more serions every year.

BECAUSE it will be the greatest and strongest society or union on earth, and you will be proud to belong to it.

BECAUSE every member will receive the most helpful farm paper printed, and the only one in the world that teaches how to get profitable prices for farm crops.

BECAUSE every person that joins brings the time nearer when perfect results will be realized. NUMBERS make strength. A large number of farmers in the A. S. of E. and reading one paper that gives them the truth about crops, markets and prices, will be irresistable.

BECAUSE it has already done agriculture more good through education than all other farmers' societies combined.

BECAUSE it has taught farmers CONTROLLED MARKETING, which has made for them hundreds of millions of dollars.

FARMERS, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

M. Wes Tubbs.

Dare you dare to lie inactive when a dozen men to-day
Make a dozen million dollars on your crops whene'er they say?
Dare you let them price your produce, price the things which you must buy?
Make you pay them double tribute; whate'er you sell, whate'er you buy?
Dare you rest in dumb submission, let a wrong so flagrant cry?

Are you sleeping? Are you crazy? Do you work for pleasure now?
Are you on your seaside outing? Is your wife in Europe now?
Are your children off to college while the servants hoe and plow?
Nay, your life is naught but drudg'ry, naught but work from morn' till night,
While your wife and children, also, need must enter in the fight.

Yes, you feed the world in plenty; keep ten million wheels in motion;
Run the steam cars and the steamboats on the land and on the ocean;
Fill the shop and mill and factory; locate marts of trade and business;
Build up cities, states and countries; form the backbone of the nation;
Pay its bills in noble fashion; even own the earth its built on.

But alas, where is your portion? Who has got it? Can you find it
In the billion-dollar steel trust, or the oil trust, or the meat trust,
Or the multi-headed food trust? In the dividends of railroads,
Telegraphs or telephones? Yes, in all of these you find it,
Find your wealth 'mid pomp and glory, 'mid the gorgeous, rich and splendid.

It is theirs. They have got it. You produced it. How about it?
Are you willing to continue being robbed of your just profit?
Will you bolt and say the farmers will not hold for better prices;
Will not join in farmers' union; are too jealous of each other;
Rather let a stranger fleece them than to help their nearest brother?
If you bolt, go hide your "physog," narrow-minded, jealous, weak,
Shut yourself in some dark closet, let the newsboys' union speak;
Even they in councils profit, so do bootblacks through their unions;
But the farmers are too folish; are too jealous, weak and fitful,
Get you all such flagrant nonsense, farmers shall in union council!

We shall form a mighty union, large in numbers, strong in power;
Which will solve in perfect justice all the problems of the hour.
We shall price our own farm produce, price it at a profit, too,
And command the world to pay it. Hold until our price does come,
Then, you farmer, have your portion; then your new life has

You no longer are a farmer, bound and shackled by a market
Made by brokers for their plunder, from your hard-earned, well-
filled basket,
But a farmer, king in power, who commands a recompense
For his many weeks of labor, for his toil and his privation,
That he, too, may take an outing; take a well-earned, long va-
cation.
Spend a day off at the seaside; send his wife to Europe now;
Send his children off to college; let the servants hoe and plow.
Nay, the farmer is not sleeping; is not crazy working now,
But a man of means and muscle, well developed at the plow,
Who in mental calculations, rules the world and markets now.

It Takes Two to
Make a Bargain

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY OF N. A.

The emblem of the American Society of Equity is symbolical of PRICE, being on an equality with PRODUCTION and CONSUMPTION.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY.

A Plan for Cooperation by Farmers to Secure Profitable Prices for all Farm Products.

"Read not to contradict and confute, not to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."—Bacon.

The machine must not belittle the engine that drives it, nor the engine the steam that propels it. Oftentimes as people look at the machines and note the great work they are doing, they do not think of the steam away back, which makes the machine useful. The farmer furnishes the steam for all the business in the country. He sows, he tills, he harvests, but if he would stop there the business of the country would be crippled. He must market, when all the machinery starts. The products of the farm flow like life blood through all the arteries of trade and give life to the whole body.

The farmer creates most of the wealth. Surely what he creates makes all wealth possible. He feeds them all and clothes them all; and he can starve them all. Yet he has, in the past, been the most helpless and dependent of all. The people who create wealth should enjoy many of its blessings.

Farmers are doing many things now because it has been the custom in the past. Merchants and manufacturers did the same way a few years ago, but they are changing their methods. The farmer may be the last one to get out of the rut, but the time has arrived for action. Progress, improvement, new methods, benefit farmers as well as other classes of business men.

The cost to produce a bushel of grain one year is about the same as another, yet one year it may bring the producer fifty cents a bushel or less and another one dollar or more. Who can make any definite calculations on such an uncertain basis as this? Here is the secret of lack of improvements

on many farms. The owner is afraid to undertake improvements for fear prices will be down and he can not pay for them.

The consumption of the various staple farm products is quite uniform year after year, whether the producer receives a fair return or not. The family who eat their loaf of bread, a pie, a cake, etc., daily when wheat is worth sixty-five cents a bushel, would eat the loaf of bread, the pie, the cake, etc., just the same if wheat was worth one dollar per bushel. A profitable—equitable—price will not curtail consumption.

Profitable prices do not necessarily mean high prices. Some farm products are high enough now, but this is the time to act and keep them profitable. Don't be deceived by a false feeling of security. Conditions may easily work around to fifteen-cent oats, twenty-cent corn and fifty-cent wheat. A fair, profitable price is what we want. No hardships imposed, but benefits bestowed on every man, woman and child.

We believe everybody will agree with us that land is the primary source of all wealth. Therefore the owners of the land have it in their power to direct the affairs of the world. A great thing to contemplate.

We believe there is one source of great danger to the prosperity of the country, and it lies in the uncertainties surrounding agriculture. No business may be considered healthy that yields such great profits as to induce extravagance, or such small profits as result in hardships; and particularly an element of uncertainty about any business is very deplorable.

It may be claimed that a very large number of farmers and producers can not be held in line to effectually control prices. We believe there are enough intelligent and sensible agriculturists in the country who, seeing the enormous benefits resulting from this plan, will not refuse to market conservatively, and thus exert the desired influence to control prices. The trouble, heretofore, has been that farmers have never yet realized the power they hold, nor has there been a plan or society through which they could cooperate for such great financial benefits.

To illustrate the relation of the farmer with the balance of the people: Go into any home in Indianapolis or any

other town or city and inquire how long the family could live without replenishing their food supply. The answer would be "we must buy to-morrow." Go to the grocery store and ask the same question and to the wholesale or commission houses, and they will tell you that, should the farmers stop marketing for a single day there would be hardships; for a week actual distress would be experienced. The same illustration can be applied to our clothing, which is made from the farmer's wool, cotton, etc. Where is there an intelligent man who is so dead to his own interests that he would not take legitimate advantage of such genuine necessity to secure his just rights and protect his own family from hardships? The producers of our food are under no legal or moral obligation to feed the world at an unfairly low price.

With things so much desired as the food we eat and the clothes we wear, the rule should be for the consumer to seek them—because he must have them—rather than for the producer to force or dump them on him.

Stop, good farmer, and consider what possibilities open up at this viewpoint. There are no other commodities in the world so desired as yours, in fact they are absolutely necessary for the comfort and existence of human and animal life. In your business you have all possibilities of extortion, yet the farmers can be trusted to feed the world at fair prices, even when cooperating on this plan, where equity rules.

This plan of cooperation contemplates a society or organization. It is called the American Society of Equity. (There may be a Russian Society of Equity, a German Society of Equity, etc., if necessary, but, as America is the great surplus nation, prices may be made here which will govern over the world.)

In support of the suggested name, "American Society of Equity," We will give Webster's definition, as follows:

"Equity—Equality of rights; natural justice of rights; the giving or desiring to give to each man his due, according to reason and the law of God to man; fairness in determination of conflicting claims; impartiality."

"Equity is synonymous with or equal to justice, rectitude. (See below.)

"Justice—The quality of being just, conformity to the prin-

ciples of righteousness and rectitude in all things, strict performance of moral obligations, practical conformity to human or divine law; integrity in the dealings of men with each other; rectitude; equity; uprightness.

"Conformity to truth and realty in expressing opinions and in conduct; fair representation of facts respecting merit or demerit; honesty; fidelity; impartiality; as:

"The rendering to everyone his due or right; just treatment, requital of desert; merited reward or punishment; that which is due to one's conduct or motives.

"Agreeableness to right, equity; justness; as the justness of a claim.

"Equity and justice are synonymous with law; right; rectitude; honesty; integrity; uprightness; fairness and impartiality.

"Justice and equity are the same; but human laws, though designed to secure justice, are of necessity imperfect, and hence what is strictly legal is at times far from being equitable or just.

"Justice, Rectitude—Rectitude, in its widest sense, is one of the most comprehensive words in our language, denoting absolute conformity to the rule of right in principle and practice."

The name, American Society of Equity, will always indicate the object of this society. We can not offer any more comprehensive explanation than contained in the word "equity" itself. Equity given and equity received will be the guiding principle of this association.

THE PLAN OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY.

The headquarters is at Indianapolis, Ind., and is called the National Union. Branches called Local Unions will be formed all over the country, in every township as frequently as necessary, to accommodate every farmer. They may be in every school district. It is not necessary for a member to belong to a local union, but it is recommended where ten or more members can join together and where they can have a meeting place. The plan of the American Society of Equity is so flexible, however, that a member, no matter where situated, can cooperate for all general benefits, with other members, without belonging to a local union. An official paper containing all advice, is the key to cooperation and goes direct to the farm. This is the only farmers' society in which members can get the full benefits of national cooperation without belonging to a local lodge or union, and without attending the meetings.

The affairs of the society are regulated by a board of seven or more directors. These directors will be experts on various lines of farm products. To illustrate, there will be a director representing each of the following and all other important crops: Wheat, corn, oats, cotton, beef, pork, poultry, dairy, tobacco, fruit, etc. The directors may be selected by members interested in the particular crops, or appointed by the officers of the society.

The key to the workings of the society will be the official paper. This will go to every member. At present it is published twice a month, as soon as the society is sufficiently developed it will be printed four times a month. Through the official paper the National Union—officers, directors and editors —will speak to all the members, giving information and ad-

vice, so that all may have the same information and be in a position to act as one man, or cooperate, as well as if they were all in one community, and could be seen individually. The National Union will be the head or clearing house for the entire agricultural business.

A very important part of the plan of the American Society of Equity is the crop reporting system. Each member will be a crop reporter. Either direct, or through his local union secretary, on blanks furnished by the National Union. This will be the most complete and most reliable crop reporting system ever undertaken or accomplished, and will afford reliable information instead of unreliable reports, as have been given to the public in the past. The crop reporting will also be carried to foreign countries which produce or consume sufficient to make them factors in this great problem.

With reliable information about crop yields and the known consumption of any commodity, the board of directors will decide what is an equitable value for each crop as it is produced, and recommend members to ask that price, and not sell for less. This will be called the *minimum* (lowest) price. If members will quit selling the moment the market will not take any more supplies at the minimum price, prices will be maintained, the demand will be supplied regularly as it appears, no over supply, surplus or glut will occur on the markets, and farmers, dealers, millers and consumers will be benefited, to say nothing of the relief from uncertainties and fear of loss attending the old system.

Remember, it will not be necessary for each person to be told when to sell any crop. The plan contemplates that each owner of produce, wherever situated, shall supply the markets through the regular channels with all they will take at the minimum price, and stop selling the moment the buyers won't take more. There need be no fear that buyers will be out of the market long, because the world must have your goods all the time. They can not do without a month, nor week, nor even a day. The price can be made and maintained as soon as this society has a million members. Then other millions will ask the price also.

We expect, under the new system, that speculation in farm

products will be at an end, but should the speculators choose to send the prices above the fair minimum price recommended by the society, members and non-members can of course accept them. It is the hope of the society that they can never bear prices below the equitable price named.

When a value is placed on a crop of grain, cotton, pork, beef, etc., it would be expected to control until the next crop year, unless very material changes occurred to affect consumption, or future crop prospects warrant a revision. To prevent too liberal marketing at the start an advance will be made on each staple article each month it is held, thus justifying part of the producers in holding their crops. This advance will be for protection only, but if there is a tendency to market too much it can be increased so as to make it profitable to hold back.

The frequent fluctuations of the market (many times a day) are not in the interest of the farmers, but for the speculators and gamblers. Do farmers profit by these fluctuations? Certainly not. But they could make many improvements, provide many comforts for their families, or indulge in many pleasures, if they knew the wheat in their granaries was worth not less than eighty-five cents or one dollar a bushel, the same in September, January and April, and the same way with other crops.

A plan such as this is the only practical one for the farmers. Manufacturers may form trusts and partnerships and be bound by ironclad agreements, but with the great agricultural industry any enormous concentration of capital to control prices would prove an incentive to unusual production, an inducement to hold crops and a desire to obtain fictitious values when the plan would fail. With our plan, where price is based entirely on merit, an unusually large world's crop, whether from increased acreage, increased yield per acre or accumulations in the hands of producers or holders, means lower prices in the future. This fear of lower prices will of itself be sufficient incentive to keep the crops moving into consumption. The safety-valve will be reliable information placed before them, a fair minimum price and the intelligence and common sense of a fair portion of the American farmers. Array

on our side the intelligent farmers who are amenable to facts and reason and the results are accomplished. The balance of the farmers, at any rate, are the stubborn, ignorant portion who are either driven or led, and are not sufficient to effect the general results.

We know, with a profitable price obtainable, the temptation to hold will not be so great, and we predict crops will be marketed closer during the year and the consumption will be greater of every staple product. Also, with profitable prices for each crop the inducement will not be present to put out an exceedingly large acreage of any one crop, which has been one of the great faults of farmers in the past.

We have had some experience with human nature, and we believe enough producers can and will demand the minimum (lowest allowable) price to make the workings of the plan definite and reliable. As to controlling production this feature will take care of itself. Consumption has overtaken production in all important lines, while with a profitable price assured, each producer will not attempt to put out a whole township as he oftentimes attempts when prices are low, in order to "make both ends meet."

Manufacturing and mercantile enterprises are not conducted by chance. Why should farming be an exception? It need not be. We appeal to every producer of crops to consider this matter very carefully and decide in the future to do business on business principles.

The selling of farm products in the past has always been a guessing match. Guessing is good enough if it hits, but a certainty is several thousand per cent. better. With profitable prices made on each crop, farmers can put up elevators, warehouses or granaries to hold their products, or build co-operative cold storage plants to hold their fruit, if necessary. Did you ever think of it? The farmer may be the greatest monopolist of them all. To illustrate: He can take the rawest kind of material (plant food), put it in his land and manufacture through his plants and animals the very highest finished products, such as meat, butter, eggs, fruit, etc., and sell them to the consumer at the highest possible price. There need be no person to share profits with him if he lives up to

his privileges. The plan of the society, however, is not to interfere with established business methods as long as the other people will concede to the farmers their rights, but only to put farming on a safe, profitable basis and secure for farmers benefits equaling those realized in other business undertakings.

With this plan in successful operation it will limit or stop all speculation in agricultural products—such as wheat, oats, corn, cotton, pork, beef, etc,—by gamblers, who only thrive on uncertainties.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY OF N. A. ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

We, the undersigned citizens of the United States of America hereby associate ourselves together as a society, hereinafter named, under and pursuant to the statutes of the State of Indiana, same being an act of General Assembly of the State of Indiana, approved March 6th, 1899, and being an act entitled "An Act for the Incorporation of Societies, not for pecuniary profit," etc., etc., by the following articles:

ARTICLE I. NAME.

The name of this society shall be

"The American Society of Equity of North America."

ARTICLE II. STOCK.

This Society has no capital stock. (It is chiefly educational.)

ARTICLE III. OBJECTS.

1. THE FIRST AND GREAT OBJECT OF THIS SOCIETY IS, TO OBTAIN PROFITABLE PRICES FOR ALL PRODUCTS OF THE FARM, GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

2. To have built and maintained granaries, elevators, warehouses and cold storage houses on the farms, in principal market cities, and in all localities where necessary, so that farm produce may be held and controlled for an advantageous price, instead of passing into the hands of middlemen or trusts.

3. To secure equitable rates of transportation.

4. To secure legislation in the interest of agriculture.

5. To open up new markets and enlarge old ones.

6. To secure new seeds, grain, fruit, vegetables, etc., from home, and from foreign countries, and distribute them with a view of improving present crops and giving a greater diversity.

7. To report crops in this and foreign countries, so that farmers may operate intelligently in planting and marketing.

8. To establish institutions of learning, so that farmers and

their sons and daughters may be educated in scientific and intensive farming, the best methods of marketing, and for the general advancement of agriculture.

9. To improve our highways.
10. To irrigate our land.
11. To prevent adulteration of food and marketing of same.
12. To promote social intercourse.
13. To settle disputes without recourse to law.
14. To promote farmers' insurance, life, fire and crop.
15. To establish similar societies in foreign countries.

ARTICLE IV. INCORPORATORS.

ARTICLE V. PLACE OF BUSINESS.

The principal offices of this Society shall be located and maintained in Indianapolis, Marion County, InIdiana, with such branch soiceties elsewhere as may be necessary to carry out the purpose of the Society.

ARTICLE VI. TERM OF EXISTENCE.

This Society shall have and is incorporated for a term of fifty (50) years' existence.

ARTICLE VII. SEAL.

The likeness and imprint of the official seal of this Society is shown on page —. (The seal is the regular emblem of the Society, with the word "Seal" added.)

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS. ELECTION.

The officers of this Society shall be a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Organizer, General Counsel and Board of seven Directors, and each and all shall be elected by popular vote of the members at the annual meeting of the Society at Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana, on the first Monday in October of each year, unless the date is changed. (Members who can not be present can vote by proxy through their Secretary or Delegate.)

ARTICLE IX. MANAGEMENT.

The business and prudential concerns of this Society shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of seven or more persons, including the President, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall be members of this Society in good standing.

CHARTER.

STATE OF INDIANA,
DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
UNION B. HUNT, SECRETARY.

To All to Whom These Presents Shall Come, Greeting:

Whereas, Articles of Association, duly signed and acknowledged, showing no Capital Stock, having been filed in the office of the Secretary of State on the 24th day of December, 1902, for the organization of

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY OF NORTH AMERICA,

under and in accordance with the provisions of an act entitled "An Act for the Incorporation of Societies not for Pecuniary Profit," etc., approved March 6th, 1889, and published on page 141 of the Acts of the General Assembly for that year, and acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto.

Now, therefore, I, Union B. Hunt, Secretary of State of the State of Indiana, by virtue of the powers and duties vested in me by law, do hereby certify that the said Society is a body politic and corporate, authorized and empowered by the laws of the State of Indiana to proceed to carry out the objects of the organ-

ization.

In witness whereof, I have hereto set my hand and affixed the seal of the State of Indiana at the City of Indianapolis, this 24th day of December, 1902.

UNION B. HUNT,
(Seal.) *Secretary of State.*

OFFICERS FOR 1905.

President—J. A. EVERITT, Indianapolis, Ind.
Secretary—M. WES TUBBS, Indianapolis, Ind.
Treasurer—ANDREW SMITH, Indianapolis, Ind.
General Counsel—MARK P. TURNER, Indianapolis, Ind.
National Organizer—H. B. SHERMAN, Greensburg, Ind.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS GOVERNING LOCAL UNIONS OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF EQUITY

ARTICLE I. NAME.

This union shall be known as the ..... Local Union of the American Society of Equity of North America. (To save confusion, all unions should bear the postoffice name, and not more than one union bear the same name, except where the territory is too large for one union others may be formed and must be designated by numbers, as Riverside Union No. 2 or No. 3, etc.)

AMENDMENT 1.— In view of the development of the rural free delivery system, it often transpires that a local union can not be definitely located by the postoffice. Therefore, it is allowable to give such local unions any local name that may be chosen.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP.

Any person, of good moral character, male or female, of the age of fourteen years or over, who is engaged in any branch of agricultural work, also all persons not engaged in agricultural work but friends of agriculture, may become members of the American Society of Equity.

PROVISO 1.—A person may be a member of the National Union and enjoy all the general benefits of the Society until there are a sufficient number of members to form a local union, but no person shall be a member of a local union without supporting the National Union. All members of the National Union are required to affiliate themselves with a local union as soon as one is organized in the neighborhood, and in this way carry out the complete plan of the Society.

PROVISO 2.— Any young persons between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, who are children of members of the Society, or wives of members, also old men (75 years or older), whose life has mainly been spent on a farm, may become complimentary members, without any membership fee or dues.

(The object of Proviso 2 is to encourage the youths to start

aright and to smooth the pathway of the old people who have become aged in the service of agriculture. Such members must be indicated when reports are sent in.)

PROVISO 4.—In the case of a woman who is actively engaged in agricultural pursuits on her own account, membership must be granted her on exactly the same terms as to men. In case of death of the husband, his membership will fall to his successor, be this widow or son, and such cases must be reported to the National Union by the secretary.

PROVISO 5. No person can hold membership in more than one local union at the same time.

ARTICLE IV. ADMISSION OF MEMBERS.

Members may be admitted at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present, not less than seven members, including officers, to constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE V. FEES.

The membership fee is $1.00, which may be sent direct to the National Union or through an organizer or local union. It secures the official paper for one year, Members' Manual and badge.

Membership fees must accompany the application.

Dues to the local union will be fixed by the union in each case. It will depend on the business they undertake to do.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICERS' SALARIES AND BONDS.

The officers of a local union shall be a President and Treasurer (or two in one) and a Secretary. It shall be their duty to perform such duties as usually fall to such officers. The officers may be reasonably paid for their services, such a sum as will secure entirely competent men. The benefits to members, if they live up to the privileges, will be so great that no hardship need be imposed by the legitimate expenses. The rate of compensation shall be fixed at the annual session.

All officers holding responsible positions should execute a safe bond.

ARTICLE VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The officers shall be elected by vote of the members, first the President, Treasurer, then the Secretary, the majority electing. The election shall be held on the third Saturday in September of each year, or on such date as the local union may elect. Officers shall be elected for one year, and serve until their successors are elected.

ARTICLE VIII. VACANCIES.

In the case of a permanent vacancy of any office for any reason, a successor must be chosen, temporarily, at the next meeting following the vacancy, and permanently at the following meeting. In case of a temporary vacancy, a temporary officer may be appointed by the remaining officer.

ARTICLE IX. ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL UNION.

Ten or more persons eligible to membership may organize a local union.

ARTICLE X. APPEALS.

Matters affecting the union, and that are not covered by the existing by-laws, may be appealed to the National Union. Such an appeal must be made in writing with the evidence.

ARTICLE XI. CHARTER.

The fee for a charter for a local union shall be $1.00, payable to the National Union.

ARTICLE XII. SEAL.

The seal of the local union shall be the name of the Society, with the town, State and number and the word SEAL added.

The cost will be charged to the local union.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS.

These by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting, providing the amendment is voted favorably. It is expected that each local union will enact such additional laws and change these laws as will best serve the condition existing in their district.

ARTICLE XIV. TIME OF MEETING.

The regular meeting of this union shall be held on the ..... day of each (week or month), at ..... o'clock. Seven members shall constitute a quorum. (Where the union owns its meeting place it is recommended that the room be kept open constantly for the use of the members.

ARTICLE XV. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES.

Litigation is to be discouraged, and in no case shall members of the American Society of Equity enter into litigation at law, with each other, or a member against a non-member, until the matter is presented to the union and its good offices used to settle the difference, except when delay will be detrimental.

Any member violating this provision shall be liable to expulsion.

ARTICLE XVI. WITHDRAWALS.

Any person may withdraw by making his desire known previous to calling to order of any meeting and being present at the meeting, when the demand will be considered in the regular order of business. Unless the applicant is persuaded to continue a member, permission to withdraw shall be given by the President. All dues are to be paid up to time of withdrawal.

ARTICLE XVII. PAYMENT OF MONEY.

All orders for warrants must be signed by both the President and the Secretary.

ARTICLE XVIII. RECORDS, REPORTS, NOTICES.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a record of all transactions. The minutes of any meeting must be approved at the next meeting and then become matter of permanent record. Also, to secure reports on crop conditions, acreage, yields, etc., and forward a copy to the National Union as frequently as twice a month, and more frequently when conditions out of the ordinary prevail. Also to report all new members, withdrawals, delinquencies, deaths, etc., sending a report to the National Union (suitable blanks shall be provided for these purposes), and to do all things as will tend to the building up of the Society and the advancement of the interests of the members.

ARTICLE XIX. LOCAL CONDITIONS, ETC.

In each locality some conditions exist that are peculiar to that place alone; therefore, it is expected to amend these by-laws to meet the conditions of the particular sections.

The American Society of Equity is not a secret society.

While co-operative buying and the conduct of co-operative stores is not deemed necessary when the farmers get profitable prices by co-operative selling, yet co-operation in any line or in any direction that will benefit the agricultural classes is not prohibited. We simply ask each member to keep in mind the motto of his beloved society, "Equity."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Read carefully. There is not a trouble affecting agriculture that cooperation will not cure. If all the problems are not solved here, it is because no person has brought them forward. There is a solution in cooperation for every problem in the agricultural book, and for nearly all the other problems of our social, political and business life.

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1. Q. Can farmers organize?

A. They did in the Grange, Alliance, Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association and other societies. Therefore, they can again, if there is a good reason for it. The reasons are more numerous now than ever before.

2. Q. Can farmers cooperate?

A. The farming industry is the same all over the country, and practically all over the world. Farmers all have their investments for one purpose, and all labor to one common purpose, viz.: to produce the necessaries and comforts of life. Laborers, on the contrary—while they all sell their labor for wages—are subject to many varied conditions, as found in the factories, stores, banks, mines, on the railroads, in cities or country, etc. They are also influenced by many interests of their employers and frequently attempts are made to prevent them from organizing and cooperating; yet they have organized and do cooperate, and have secured great benefits from such cooperation. If laborers can cooperate for their mutual good under such conditions, who dare say that farmers can not? No fair person will oppose the farmers' organization on the plan proposed by the American Society of Equity. On the contrary every person doing a legitimate business will help the organization, because it will help him. Farmers are surely as intelligent as coal miners and factory employes, and surely they can see it is to their great (yes, enormous) interest to cooperate for every good thing. Every class of people can cooperate except Indians, idiots and the insane—unless we except the farmers. We will see if farmers must be classed with the above after giving them a trial on a good plan.

3. Q. Will farmers hold together and cooperate?

A. Give them all, or half, or quarter, of the benefits that the

A. S. of E. promises, and you can not drive them apart. Appeal to their self-interest—selfish interests, if you please—and they will stick to the thing that makes them money and elevates their calling.

4. Q. Does speculation injure farmers?

A. It certainly does. It is the greatest curse of the country. Usually the farmers' crops are sold months before they are grown, when, if conditions justify higher prices the speculators won't let the price go up until their contracts are filled. The boards of trade are the devil's workshops, in which the earnings of farmers are forged for the benefit of a few individuals who become immensely wealthy.

5. Q. Is not cheap food a blessing to the world?

A. Cheap food and dear pleasures are not equitable. In prosperous times the masses spend money extravagantly for pleasures. Why should they not pay good prices for food? In fact, low prices to the farmers will speedily put them out of the field as consumers, and every business and all working people in the country will suffer.

6. Q. What are the speculative commodities?

A. Agricultural products, railroad shares and mining stocks.

7. Q. Why are these selected to speculate in?

A. Because of the uncertainties attending them.

8. Q. How can agricultural products be removed from the list?

A. By making prices certain. By fixing a price once a year, when the crop is produced, and demanding that price. This is equitable, the farmer has as much right to do this as the manufacturer, the banker, the lawyer, the physician, the gas man, the ice man, the union laborer or any other person on earth. Besides, the farmer has a better chance to enforce his demands than any of the others. His goods are indispensable; the others may be done without.

9. Q. When is the time to organize the farmers?

A. Now is the time. There are more farmers in an independent condition now than for many years. These are the farmers who have good land and raised good crops in the short crop years. Short crops make good prices. Big crops make low prices. Farmers suffer more from big crops than from small crops. This is the time to organize and keep prices up. Have you not noticed how the speculators price your crops down as soon as crop prospects are good? As soon as you raise big crops two years in succession prices will go away down. Don't you want good prices for good crops? Then the blessings will be equally distributed. Organize now, and not when mortgages are plastered all over your homes.

10. Q. Will farmers' business grow worse?

A. Lines opposed to the farmers—and they constitute every

other industry, profession and consumer in the country—are being drawn closer in organization and cooperation. As they all get their living from the farm, they will employ the sharp practices that the stirring times have developed to beat down the farmers' prices to the very lowest level. True, there will be seasons of short crops, when prices will stay up, but in seasons of large crops there will be absolutely no sustaining power to prices of farm products unless the farmers will furnish it. I defy any person to show me the man or set of men who will protect another man or set of men in trade, who will not try to protect himself. The grasping, greedy disposition is not the spirit of Christianity, but it is human nature. The weak are always oppressed by the strong, the disorganized by the organized. There is absolutely no safety or good prospect in this country for an industry not organized.

11. Q. Are there not too many farmers to cooperate?

A. This is a popular fallacy that sound reasoning will dispel. The great number of farmers will be the great element of strength in farmers cooperating. All the farmers don't need to hold crops at any time, as the markets will take immense quantities of supplies every day. All that will be required will be enough farmers to control that part that goes on the market and creates a temporary over supply or surplus. This over supply makes the low price on all. Take, for example, the year 1901: all crops except wheat were short; everything, corn, oats, fruit, vegetables, meat, etc., brought high prices. Why? Because there was no over supply at any time and the buyers were eager to get all that was offered. Now let us see how about wheat. It was a large crop. The price ruled low. Why? Because growers of wheat fed the market faster than it needed it; yet the entire crop was consumed, although it was the largest crop the country ever raised. No business can maintain prices or control prices that markets a year's supplies in a few months. Cooperation is intended to produce the same condition that prevails when there is a short crop—i. e., keep the stuff back on the farm or in warehouses until the demand comes for it. Comparatively a small portion of the producers can do this, even though the others won't try. IF WE HAVE A MILLION OR MORE MEMBERS IN THE A. S. OF E., ENOUGH OF THEM WILL HOLD THEIR CROPS BACK TO PREVENT THE TEMPORARY OVER SUPPLY, IN SPITE OF ALL THE WEAK, STUBBORN FARMERS THAT MAY BE ARRAYED AGAINST THEM. The A. S. of E. proposes, however, to make it profitable to hold crops.

We train ourselves to watch ourselves,
Until we find at length
We've made our very weakness
The pillars of our strength.

12. Q. Is the American Society of Equity a good name?

A. Yes, considering the power of the farmers when cooperating, it is necessary to have a motto that will influence their actions. For instance, the farmers could practice inequity to the disadvantage of all other classes if they wanted to. Therefore, the originator of the plan of the A. S. of E. selected this name as a promise by the farmers that they would DO EQUITY and a notice to the world that they would EXPECT EQUITY. EQUITY means justice, right, honesty, impartiality. It is the basis of moral strength and potent influences. It is the ground swell of fraternity, of good fellowship and the essence of neighborly kindness. It will make the world better to the extent to which it is recognized and practised. No one can hide behind it with a plea of ambiguity, as it is one of the most uncompromising words in the English language, covering not a shade of selfishness, unfairness or one-sidedness. A society founded on EQUITY is founded on the solid rock of fair dealing and righteousness. No better foundation word could be found for self-protection or society.

13. Q. If farmers get profitable prices, will they not overproduce?

A. Take into consideration the fact that in the last fifty years practically all our great western and northwestern states were brought into cultivation and immense areas in the older states cleared, drained and made productive, yet all the products have been consumed. There are no more such areas to open up. Also, farmers need rest, and their farms need rest to recuperate in fertility. Is it not reasonable to suppose, with profitable prices, that the farmers will work less and produce less?

14. Q. If a surplus should exist any time, what would be done with it?

A. When farmers control their crops and regulate prices they have done a great thing. There are, however, other uncertainties connected with farming that they can not control. We refer to the weather. Do the best they can, they can not control rainfall, frosts, heat or cold; also, insects and blight are uncertain factors in the production of crops. These factors will make short crops some seasons. If farmers are cooperating they can easily hold the surplus of good seasons, should they exist, over to the short years, thus equalizing supplies and prices, and benefiting both producers and consumers. In case of perishable products, fruit, vegetables, etc., they can be preserved, canned or manufactured to far better advantage than when each farmer is for himself.

15. Q. How can poor farmers hold their crops to help maintain the minimum prices?

A. 1. We don't think they will need to hold. 2. But suppose they do: under the new system it will be profitable to hold; therefore, more will hold than under the old plan. Each additional farmer who holds will make a better market for the poor farmer who can not hold. 3. A slight increase in price will be made each month to offset interest, shrinkage, etc., to those farmers who hold. This is not intended to be enough to be particularly profitable, but for protection. However, if enough don't hold, the monthly advance can be made larger until it is PROFITABLE TO HOLD, and until the supply dries up enough to maintain the minimum price. This will give the poor farmer the early market all to himself. 4. With a minimum price established dealers will want to buy all they possibly can. They know the price won't be lower, and will be higher (on account of the monthly increase in price). We believe there will be buyers for more grain and staple crops than will be offered. It will be the aim of the society to keep the bulk of the crops out of the hands of speculators and back on the farms or in farmers' warehouses, and feed the markets as they need it. If the farmers would sell all their wheat, corn, oats and other grains to me now at prevailing prices, and contract all their year's output of meat, dairy products, eggs, poultry and fruit to me at prevailing prices, I could make a billion dollars profit on the deal. Perhaps it would be necessary to destroy some of the perishable products, but I would not market a single lot of stuff except at a profit. All I would want, is control of the products, and I would make the market price. This is what the A. S. of E. proposes to do, by farmers cooperating. 5. With profitable prices secured, farmers would take the rest cure for themselves and their farms. Thus there would be less production and a better chance to maintain prices.

16. Q. Is wheat worth $1.00 a bushel?

A. Wheat should not sell for less than $1.00 per bushel on basis of Chicago market any year. But what it is worth will depend on the yield and supply. Farmers go to as much expense and effort to produce a three-fourths crop as a full crop, hence should receive as much money for it. After farmers have done the best they can they should have uniform wages in the returns from the crops, whether large or small. From the consumer's standpoint, there is nothing else he can buy of equal intrinsic value.

17. Q. Have wheat growers been factors in making prices?

A. They have been. No well-informed person will deny that they largely changed their plan of marketing. This was particularly noticeable with the 1903 crop, when with a good crop the visible supply was kept smaller than ever known before with the same size crop. In 1904 the price

was over $1.00 from the start, and influenced liberal marketing when the price was right, and marketing always slackened as soon as the price declined.

18. Q. Who are eligible to membership in the A. S. of E.?

A. Farmers (owners and renters) of all descriptions, and friends of farmers, with their wives and sons and daughters, between 14 and 21 years of age.

19. Q. Why do you admit merchants, bankers, etc.?

A. Their's and the farmers' interests are mutual. The success of one class makes it better for other classes. The merchants want the farmers to organize and get good prices, so they can pay good prices for good goods, and not buy the nasty cheap goods, as they now oftentimes do. Bankers want farmers to organize, because it will add stability of value to all property and insure permanent prosperity. The farmer may as well take them into their society if they want to come, as it will be easier to control them on the inside than to shut them out, arouse their antagonism and control them on the outside. Besides, most merchants and bankers are farmers also; therefore, you could not debar all unless you limit a farmer's business to farming. In the A. S. of E. we hope all the people in the country and small towns will cooperate to the upbuilding of rural America, get more profit for the goods in the country and spend the money there.

20. Q. Is the A. S. of E. a secret society?

A. No. The farmers don't need to have any secrets from anybody else. Where equity is given and received, you don't need to hold your meetings behind sealed doors. The farmers cooperating will be so strong that they can go boldly before the world, make their equitable demands and get justice, or take it.

21. Q. Must a member belong to a local union?

A. No; a member anywhere can get the full benefit of national cooperation without belonging to a local union. The official paper will be the key and guide for action. It will give advice regarding markets, crops, prices, etc., so all can act as one man. Local unions are particularly for local affairs, social features, and assisting each other to hold crops.

22. Q. Will farmers stick together?

A. They will when there is something to stick for. In the old attempts they did not get enough benefits. What is buying at lower prices as compared to selling at fair prices? The A. S. of E. is built for benefits, from the ground up. Once let farmers realize some of the benefits of cooperation on this plan, and no influence on earth can drive them apart.

23. Q. How are members bound?

A. There is no binding agreement. It is proposed to make it

to their interests to belong to the A. S. of E. If, after a fair trial, great benefits can not be shown, then farmers can not cooperate. It would be useless to bind farmers in an ironclad agreement, as many would break the agreement, and then they wouuld have disrespect for it. If farmers will hold crops, as they do now, for an uncertain advance, will they not market conservatively to maintain a profitable price?

24. Q. What is the membership fee and dues?

A. One dollar. This also pays for the official paper, badge, certificate, all advice and crop reports from the National Union and all dues for the first year. Future dues will be small, as the membership will be very large. Membership to his wife is free, also to his sons and daughters, between 14 and 21 years.

25. Q. What is the local union membership fees or dues?

A. No membership fee. The dues will be fixed by each local union to meet their requirements.

26. Q. Will not profitable prices for farmers make higher prices for consumers?

A. No. We expect consumers' prices to average lower when farmers cooperate. At present the middlemen and trusts often get more than the farmers. They pile up mountains of profit between the two. This will be regulated or cut out entirely if they do not deal fairly.

27. Q. How will the farmers' organization effect labor?

A. When farmers get profitable prices the labor problem on the farm will be solved, as they can then hire the help needed. It will make a market for a million or more laborers the year around. This movement is the greatest thing for working people that ever was proposed.

28. Q. How will this movement effect the producer of perishable products?

A. Cold storage houses and warehouses will be provided where fruit, butter, eggs, vegetables, meat, etc., will be held as the producers' property until the market can use them. In the case of berries, peaches, etc., the markets will be known and supplied to the maximum consumption at good prices, but no more. By knowing the needs of all the markets a much greater volume of products can be directed to them than in the uncertain way as at present, and if an actual surplus exists it will be left to spoil at home, or be preserved by canning or otherwise. The society will be of enormous benefit to producers of perishable crops.

29. Q. How about meat? Will you advance the price?

A. Beef is too high to the consumer and too low to the producer. The society will elevate the farmer's price and reduce the selling price. Other meat will be put on an equitable basis and kept there.

30. Q. Can this society regulate the price of potatoes?

A. Certainly. This is a crop that frequently sells at ruinously low prices when the production is large. It will be one of the easiest to control. When the farmers are organized in Maine, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, the trick will be done. Consumers can pay fifty cents a bushel for potatoes as a minimum price—which should net the grower thirty cents to forty cents, when the crop is large—as well as anything under. The chances are that the city consumer who buys in the small will pay twenty cents a peck if the grower got only twenty cents a bushel. This society will prevent such inequalities. The same illustration will apply to apples, only the difference is usually greater.

31. Q. Can the A. S. of E. insure good prices for tobacco?

A. Most certainly. When tobacco growers are organized in the A. S. of E. prices will be agreed upon and all the growers will need to do will be to hold their crops off of the market a while and the trust or independent buyers will soon pay the price. Farmers, controlling the supply of tobacco, will be ten thousand times stronger than the trust which can't do a thing without tobacco.

32. Q. Will the minimum (profitable) price limit consumption?

A. No. It will rather stimulate trade and increase consumption. Because it will remove uncertainties. Under the old system, if the farmer thought prices too low he would not sell. If the buyer thought they were too high he would not buy; also, the buyer was always fearful the price would go down, therefore he always wanted to buy as low as possible. Under the new system certainty will prevail. There will be no fear or hesitancy. All will sell and buy as much as the market wants, and farm products will go into consumption with greater ease and regularity than by the old system. This plan has beauties and advantages that can not be fully realized or appreciated until it is in working order.

33. Q. How can farmers store their produce?

A. Several local unions can join together and erect necessary warehouses, cold storage houses or elevators. These will be under their direct control. There will be another class owned by the society in principal cities, where produce can be shipped and stored for account of the owner. Warehouse receipts will be issued on grain and produce, which can be used as credit at banks to secure money. Non-perishable goods should be held on the farm as much as possible. A good granary is as good as an elevator, while no storage is charged.

34. Q. How will you regulate railroad rates, stock yard charges, grain inspections, grading, etc.?

A. Let it be understood that the farmers in this society don't intend to control anybody or anything but their own business and prices. Heretofore the farmers were taught that to get justice they must fight everybody and everything on earth. It is a grevious mistake. All the farmers need to do is to put the price on their goods at their market town and get their price there. They don't need to care what the railroads or stockyards charge, unless they want to protect the consumer, and this they can do when they are strong and powerful through organization. Don't let anybody make you believe that you must fight anybody when you have the goods everybody else must have to live on and for their comfort.

35. Q. Is it a fact that the larger the crop the lower the price?

A. Invariably, and there are many cases where the smallest and nastiest crops the country ever raised brought the most money to the farmers, and the largest, finest crops the least money. Hundreds of times farmers see their efforts crowned with success in producing a crop, only to meet crushing disappointment when marketing.

36. Q. Will you not need to control production as well as supply?

A. No. The world will take all the food crops this country will grow, and pay a fair price for them if the farmers will regulate the marketing so as to prevent over supply at any time. Consumption is ahead of production now, and we predict will increase faster than production, unless our farmers get better prices to encourage better farming and larger crops.

37. Q. Do farmers need to market a twelve months' supply in a few months?

A. No. We have referred to this before. Here is the whole secret of failure in the past and success for the future. Suppose a year's supply of coal had to be marketed in three months in the summer. The miners would get a very low price, the middlemen make a mountain of profit, and the consumer would pay more than an equitable price.

38. Q. Will it not be sufficient to have storehouses and get a low rate of freight?

A. Never. What profiteth a farmer if he stores his grain, but lets the speculator, trust or middleman price it at last? This is not another way to whip the devil around the bush, and the devil will catch him coming or going. Storage charges, commissions and reduced railroad freight combined are not equal to putting a fair price on your own stuff and taking your profit first.

39. Q. Do you think money can be well spent in marketing farm products?

A. Surely. It is a fact that manufacturers and merchants

frequently spend as much money in advertising, traveling representatives and in other ways to find a market as the goods cost in the first place. Farmers have been spending nothing—simply dumping their fine products, to let them take their chances on prices, and without any regard to their brother farmer's interests. Through cooperation farmers can market their goods much cheaper than can any other class, because there is a natural demand for them. Others must create a demand.

40. Q. On what does the prosperity of our country depend?

A. On the farmers. They constitute about half our population. They are also the greatest consumers. Keep them prosperous by always getting good prices, as this society proposes, and the country can not have hard times. I am not thoroughly acquainted with European countries, but I think the cause of their depression of business is with the farmers. The European farmers are kept down by the competition of this country.

41. Q. But many of the farmers may not join and thus defeat your plans.

A. We will first get the million, and then make it impracticable for the balance to stay out of the society. For instance, we will, first, make it profitable for them to come in; second, union farmers' products will be marketed in distinguishing packages and under the Union label. These goods will be of guaranteed purity and high quality and will be sought after and taken first before the non-union farmers' products will be taken; also union laborers will buy only the union farmers' products, because the society proposes to make a great demand for labor at good wages.

42. Q. Tell about the system of crop reporting.

A. Every member will become a crop reporter. In this way we will have the most complete and reliable reports, quite in contrast with the guessing at the present time.

43. Q. Who will this movement injure?

A. No person doing a legitimate business, but will build them all up.

44. Q. Can this society prevent adulteration of food products?

A. This is one of the chief objects of the society, and when established it can effectually prevent adulteration, by inspection of food products, and by demanding and securing legislation against it. Fraud in food must cease. It is injurious to health, besides reduces the farmer's market to an amazing extent.

45. Q. Why not have a society for each crop. For instance, grain growers, cattle growers, fruit growers, tobacco growers, cotton growers, etc.?

A. Quite unnecessary. One national society, with representatives from all of these special crops on the national board,

can act as the clearing house for all the crops. In this way fewer officers will be needed. The expenses will be much less; a better knowledge of crops and markets may be had, and, more than all, a mixed producer need not belong to a half dozen societies to secure representation.

46. Q. How many members had the Alliance and Grange?

A. About three or four millions each.

47. Q. Do you think they could have succeeded if they had operated on the plan of the A. S. of E.?

A. I do. I am sure if they had made their first object to secure profitable prices for their own goods instead of attempting to put prices on the other party's goods, farmers would be successfully cooperating to-day, and rural America would be a paradise.

48. Q. Are agricultural colleges, experiment stations, farmers' institutes and farm papers doing good for the farmers?

A. Yes. It is well for all classes to be educated and enlightened; but also, no, for they are teaching how to increase production, while we all know the larger the crop the lower the price. Now don't think that I am opposed to educating the farmers, but until they are also educated as to how to get a good price for increased crops the effort toward education is largely lost. Think about this. Farmers should demand of their institutions cooperation to bring about better conditions in marketing.

49. Q. What will be the result if this effort to organize the farmers fails?

A. There will be a land trust formed. The owners of the land will go into a trust, or capitalists will buy up the land. They can easily then control production and prices. This will be the worst thing that can happen to the country, but it is inevitable. In short, as we have shown that capital is dependent upon the farms, the capitalists may conclude that they must control the land to insure the integrity and permanency of their capital and investments.

50. Q. Suppose when the farmers organize, buyers would refuse to pay the price they demand?

A. How can they? Can consumers (human and domestic animals) do without food and clothing? If they would not pay the reasonable prices, farmers could strike for higher wages, and the strike would have the proper effect in a very few days. A farmers' strike would mean much more than a strike by union laborers. All others are dependent on the farmers. The farmers are dependent on no other class.

51. Q. How does the food trust operate?

A. It has warehouses in many parts of the country. It buys the farmer's fruit, vegetables, potatoes, butter, eggs, poultry, etc., in the summer, when prices are low, puts them in cold

storage, and they come out at two or three times the price between seasons. The farmers can attend to all this when organized.

52. Q. Could the government help the farmers by loaning them money at a low rate of interest?

A. No, not permanently. Besides the farmers don't need help in that way. It would be the most degrading thing that could be offered them to make them the special objects of the country's charity. The farmer's position is the strongest of all. If they will only rise to their true position, they will never need to look to the government or outside sources for help.

53. Q. Are not farmers taxed too heavily?

A. Yes; but here again if they will cooperate and get profitable prices they won't need to care how much they are taxed. They can simply add it on the price of their goods.

54. Q. When the farmers are organized they will likely become a power in politics?

A. They could if they would. But why will they want to bother with politics? They won't need anything in the way of profits that they can't take when they price their goods. We expect them, however, to dictate to political parties, for the interests of consumers and equity to all.

55. Q. Is the ground as productive now as formerly?

A. No. Our farms have been robbed of their original fertility and the crops sold at prices that did not afford renewing it. It would bankrupt many farmers to restore the fertility to their farms, and it will bankrupt them if they continue farming under the present system if they don't. So here you have a dilemma that absolutely demands better prices for farm products. Many farmers have already sold their birthright (the accumulated plant food of centuries) for a mess of pottage, and others will do it under the old system.

56. Q. You speak of intensive farming. What do you mean?

A. I mean raising the average of all our crops to two or three times the present yield. This can only be done by scientific farming, building up the soil with plant food and irrigation. All these wait on profitable prices for farm crops.

57. Q. Could not good prices be made for farmers if your society had a large capital with which to buy the crops?

A. Never. If all the money in the United States treasury was employed for this purpose the scheme would fail. Farmers must individually be responsible for their production as well as prices. If a company would agree to take all they raise at profitable prices there might be no check on their production, while the company or society MUST FIND SOME OTHER

PERSON WHO WILL TAKE THEM AT AN EVEN HIGHER PRICE; and here would come failure in time.

58. Q. Why not organize one state and see how the plan will work?

A. This would be useless. It would not work. The farmers in Indiana could not do anything unless the farmers in Illinois, Ohio, etc., will cooperate with them. Also, it would not be possible to control prices on one crop and let the others take their chances, as then the crops that are not controlled would be neglected and the other one would be overproduced.

59. Q. Can farmers secure profitable prices on their crops regardless of the European farmers?

A. As soon as the European farmers know the price set by American farmers they will gladly rise to it. America has set the price on food in the past, and set it too low. European farmers suffered more than did our farmers, and they will be glad when the range is set higher. America can do this thing without the cooperation of Europe, because it is the greatest surplus country. But European farmers will cooperate, and arrangements are now making to organize them.

60. Q. Have farmers a moral right to price their products?

A. Somebody prices them. Who has a better right than the first owners? If you would deny the farmers the moral right how can you justify the speculators, gamblers, food trusts, and unfair, scheming middlemen, who rob at both ends and never earned a morally honest dollar in their life? Certainly farmers have a moral right to price the product of their investment, skill and labor. It is a divine right. "The laborer is worthy of his hire."

61. Q. Should farmers form a union or should they strive to destroy other trusts and unions?

A. With some people this is the most important question of all. Farmers have been taught to oppose all trusts and unions. They are taught to oppose the trusts because they raise the price of goods the farmers buy. They are taught to oppose unions because the price of labor is higher than they can pay. They are taught to fight everything that don't measure down to their standard; but they have never been taught to raise their standard up to measure with the highest and with the best, until the publisher of Up-to-Date Farming took the field to lead them out of the wilderness of darkness and into the broad light. Farmers can't overthrow the trusts and unions, so this is the end of that. But they can put such prices on their products as will allow them to meet prices made by others; increased taxation; and pay the market price for labor. The trouble is not that we have unions, but we need another union—a great union of farm-

ers—which will be so great that it will temper all other unions.

62. Q. Why don't other farm papers help to get profitable prices for farm crops?

A. There are various reasons. Some don't understand the plan. Some want to wait until it is an assured success. Some say that farmers have no right to price their crops. Some want farmers to wait until Divine Providence gets good prices for them. Some say prices have been good enough and farmers don't need anything better. Some have other plans to accomplish the same results. Some are in the hire of the class of people who are now reaping the profit from farmers' hard work. Some are too ignorant; some are too smart. Some are jealous, and some are vindictive. Read this extract from a letter to a person who betrayed his trust:

"_____, March 17, 1904.

"*Mr. J. A. Everitt, President A. S. of E., Indianapolis, Ind.:*

"Dear Sir—I feel it my moral duty to let you know that a prominent farmers' paper invited me, and made offers to me to take up arms against you. * * * The letter of said prominent editor of a prominent agricultural paper closes in this way: 'I do not know that I care to go into an open fight with Everitt, but if I could see a chance to give him a neat stab under the fifth rib I think I would rather enjoy doing it.'

"'Yours truly,

"_____."

Names are withheld for the present.

Why don't other farm papers help to teach farmers how to control marketing and compel a fair price for their products? The principal reason is that the society must have an official paper. The plan was originated by the publisher of Up-to-Date Farming. Naturally that paper became the official organ. They know the success of the society and the success of the farmers means a large circulation for the official paper. They have been assured that it was not the intention of the publisher of Up-to-Date to monopolize the agricultural field, that the official paper would become a strictly society paper. But this does not appease them, and many of them have done all they could to injure the movement. They have not the welfare of the farmer close enough at heart to lay aside all petty jealousies, excuses and selfish interests and help the farmers to try this plan. Farmers should know their friends in a time like this. Any editor and publisher who opposes this movement is your enemy, and every editor and publisher who won't help you to get equitable prices always, by the only plan that is practicable,

is not your friend. When a cowardly editor says he would enjoy stabbing the author and promoter of this great and good movement, that means so much for farmers, he is expressing a wish to stick his dirk into the vitals of the farming industry of the country; and every farmer who loves independence and fair play should stretch out his arm to ward off the blow.

63. Q. Does the A. S. of E. oppose other Farmers' societies?

A. No. The A. S. of E. has the kindliest feeling for all farm organizations. It only asks that all unite to accomplish the first object of this society, viz.: "Profitable Prices for All Farm Products." They need not abandon their special forms, but should add this object to their others and make it paramount.

64. Q. What will be some of the results of cooperation by farmers?

A. The results will be everything the farmers want or should have. Then land will increase in value 25 to 100 per cent. They will build good, modern, comfortable houses and barns. They will beautify their grounds. They will educate their children. They will build good roads all over the country. The farmer and his wife and children will work less and hire more, visit and entertain more. The farmer's wife will furnish her home as well as the city woman does. The farm labor problem will be solved. The boys will want to stay on the farm, because it offers possibilities equal to any other business, and the farmers' profession will be the best one on earth. Besides all these things, and many more not necessary to mention, the success of this society will build up the country towns, and through the country merchants the benefits will reach the cities. It will, in short, benefit every legitimate industry and every man, woman and child in the country. It means more for humanity than anything since the Christian era.

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